



**INTERNATIONAL SHOOTING
SPORT FEDERATION**

A large, faint target graphic is centered in the background of the cover. It features concentric circles and a central bullseye, rendered in a light blue color that blends with the dark blue background.

**ISSF
ATHLETE'S
HANDBOOK**

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ISSF ATHLETE'S HANDBOOK

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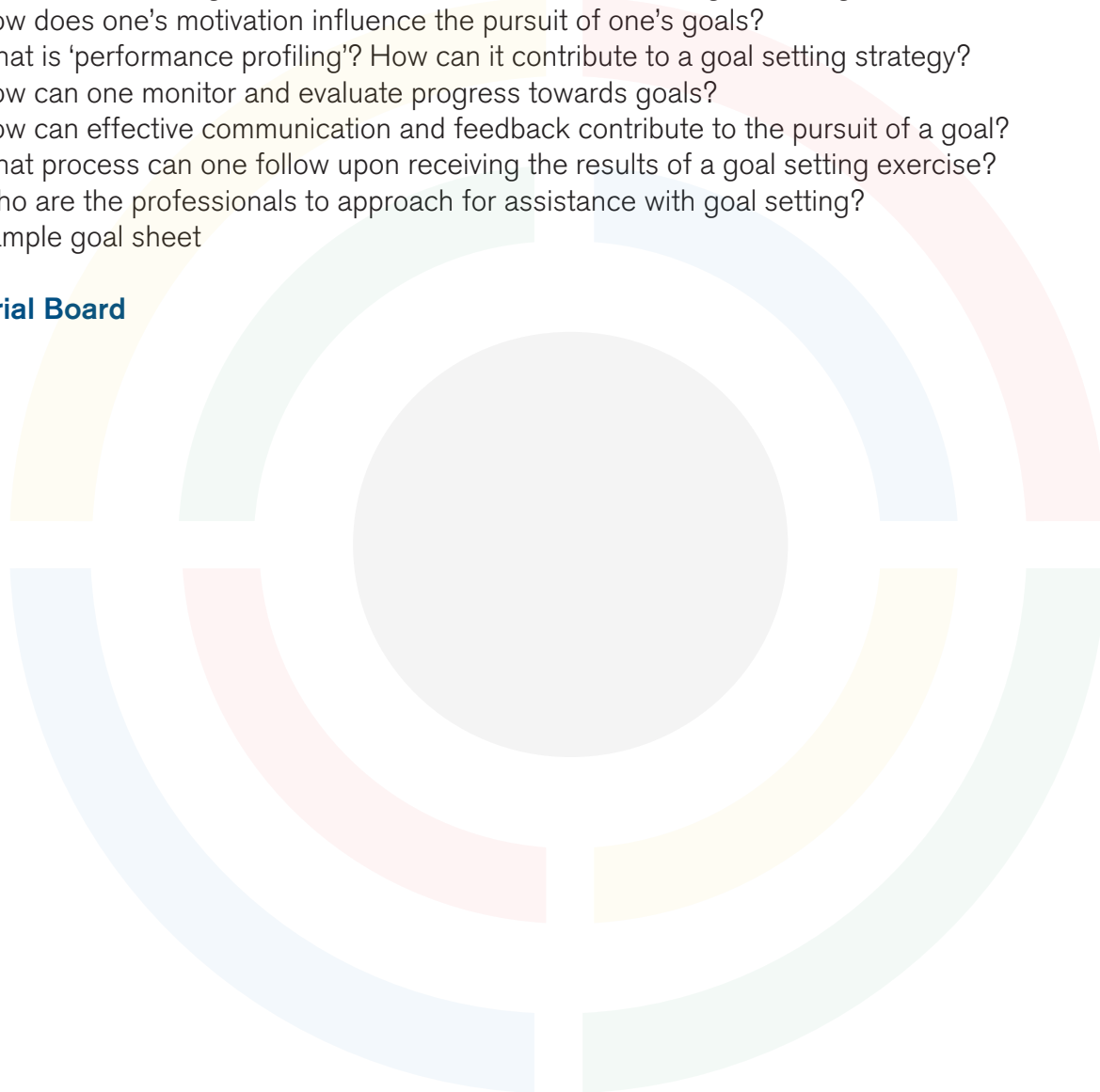
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INTRODUCTION

The history of shooting sport is long, vibrant and rich, considering that it was one of the sports included in the inaugural edition of the modern Olympic Games in 1896. The International Shooting Sport Federation is committed towards protecting the interests of the sport and facilitating its progress. This comes with the responsibility of ensuring effective administration and development, the pathway to which is exciting and challenging in equal measure.

We, at the ISSF, put in best efforts to prioritize the welfare of athletes in all our decisions and initiatives. We realize that universality is an inherent value of the sport, given that the athletes involved represent over a hundred countries. We strive to address the needs of participants from different cultural backgrounds and ensure that they have a good experience during competitions. The demands of the sport are dynamic and we would like them to be best prepared to deal with them.

The success of athletes and their effective participation is dependent on the timely professional guidance received. With the objective of making such guidance accessible, we have embarked on the initiative to create the ISSF Athlete's Handbook. Considering the range of topics covered, I believe this is a pioneering effort to present relevant information for the benefit of athletes around the world.

I would like to commend Mr. Abhinav Bindra and the entire Athletes Committee, assisted by the GoSports Foundation team, for putting this together. I would also like to thank all the various subject matter experts and athletes for their valued contributions. The handbook has been able to capture relevant knowledge and create a good base for the future. I recommend all individuals involved with the professional sport of shooting to access the handbook and make the best use of its contents.

Olegario Vázquez Raña
ISSF President

ABOUT THE HANDBOOK

At the ISSF, we are privileged to bear the responsibility of developing the sport of shooting and creating a culture that is conducive to its overall growth. This revolves around having the appropriate support structure that enables the nurturing of talent and an ecosystem that maintains healthy competition.

The challenges faced while training and participating are diverse and ever-changing. Therefore, it is essential to have platforms that educate athletes and enable them to construct a structured approach that is most suited to their unique requirements. While good performance is much desired, equal importance ought to be levied on the processes involved and the overall well-being.

The purpose of creating the ISSF Athlete's Handbook is to build awareness on all relevant facets of the sport for those who seek to participate and succeed. The information in the book is presented in the form of questions. You can go through the contents and start reading the book from a specific question or a section that most appeals to you. The handbook can be used either to get basic understanding about a topic or as a reference whenever faced with an issue.

The need to safeguard and empower athletes is being highlighted all over the world and reinforced through initiatives like the Olympic Agenda 2020. This handbook is a step in that direction. I am glad that the Athletes Committee, Medical Committee, Coach Advisory Committee, the GoSports Foundation team and various other subject matter experts could coordinate to develop the contents of the handbook. I would like to thank everyone involved for their efforts and I wish that this sincere initiative can benefit many.



Franz Schreiber
ISSF Secretary General

FOREWORD



Following a long career in the rifle discipline, it has been a privilege to be able to serve the interests of the sport through my role at the ISSF Athletes Committee. The responsibilities and activities involved have brought me closer to the practical realities of managing and developing the sport. The creation of the ISSF Athlete's Handbook is an honest attempt by the Committee to make a lasting contribution and I am thrilled to see it come to light.

Through my personal experiences, I have realized the worth of an environment that supports and empowers athletes as they engage in training and competition. The kind of challenges and setbacks involved are diverse and a sports career can often become a lonely journey. I was, however, fortunate to have been associated with experts, mentors and inspiring peers, who supported me in numerous ways to pursue my goals. In that sense, there is a lot of value in having the awareness to seek the right kind of advice and support at various stages of the career.

The members of the Athletes Committee regularly gather views and concerns from athletes. We have realized that access to information is much needed to address challenges with confidence. This handbook has been designed to fulfil the need. It covers a range of topics, from sports science to career management. It also touches upon opportunities available through the ISSF and the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Besides, the book includes views from current and former athletes to help one to contextualize the various facts presented.

We, at the Athletes Committee, are pleased to have invested our efforts into this initiative. It is our humble contribution to a sport that has played an integral part of our lives and brought us much joy. I would like to personally thank ISSF President Mr. Olegario Vázquez Raña and Secretary General Mr. Franz Schreiber, both of whom have been supportive of this initiative. My sincere gratitude to Dr. Kevin Kilty from the Coach Advisory Committee and Dr. James M Lally from the Medical Committee who have greatly assisted us. I would also like to thank all the other professionals and fellow athletes who have generously contributed in varying capacities. Finally, credit to the GoSports Foundation team for having worked diligently with the ISSF to create the handbook.

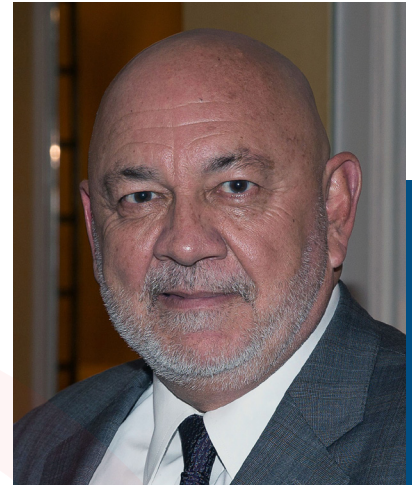
I sincerely hope that the handbook can assist, support and inspire!

Abhinav Bindra
Chairman, ISSF Athletes Committee

FOREWORD

The ISSF Medical Committee constantly works towards disseminating knowledge on doping, physical health and psychological well-being at all levels of competition through structured and far-reaching values-based education programs.

The ISSF Medical Committee is well aware that an athlete's success often depends on the choices and decisions he or she makes throughout his or her career. Informed choices and decisions can only be made if trusted and reliable sources of information are made available to an athlete. We are pleased to recognize the ISSF Athlete's Handbook as one of these sources.



The ISSF is a signatory to the World Anti-Doping Code and all aspects of its anti-doping program have been deemed compliant to the Code by WADA, notably with regards to education and awareness. The Athlete's Handbook supplements our educational efforts by canvassing various topics related to the ISSF's anti-doping program. This includes outlining relevant processes and providing important reminders to all athletes on prohibited substances, therapeutic use exemptions and supplement use among others. It further touches upon the legal consequences of anti-doping rule violations which can impact an athlete's eligibility to participate.

The well-being of athletes depends on the maintenance of good physical health and the ability to effectively prevent and manage injuries. The handbook also considers these topics and guides athletes to take the best possible precautions during training and while travelling to competitions.

In short, the handbook is a great resource for all athletes to effectively manage all stages of their careers. I am grateful to Ms Janie Soublière and all other professionals who have devoted their time and efforts towards the creation of this publication. I believe that it is a great tool for all athletes and can assist them to pursue long-term success by staying alert and informed on all applicable rules and procedures as well as optimal training methods.

Dr James M Lally
Chairman, ISSF Medical Committee



FOREWORD

For an athlete to perform to the best of his or her abilities, it is essential to have a source of continuous support and constant guidance. Coaches are an integral part of an athlete's journey and play a significant role in shaping their lives. They bear the responsibility of not only ensuring best possible performance but also overall welfare. They have to keep pace with the dynamic nature of sport, and actively create secure environments to engage the athletes.

The ISSF Coach Advisory Committee works with coaches across the world to ensure the best support system for all those involved in shooting sport. We acknowledge that coaches require a wide variety of skills and knowledge to always adapt effectively. All programmes

and initiatives of the committee are designed to uphold the interest of the athletes and respect their right to be heard in decisions related to their careers or lives.

The creation of The ISSF Athlete's Handbook is a novel initiative that can strengthen the relationship between coaches and athletes. On one hand, it can equip coaches to gain an updated understanding of numerous topics like goal setting and injury management. On the other hand, it can enhance the ability of athletes to communicate about their needs and seek timely interventions. Eventually, this can result in the creation of ideal conditions for training.

I hold the opinion that athletes have to be seen, respected and celebrated beyond their performance in sport. This handbook can enable them to develop a holistic world-view. Based on personal experience, I am glad that the book also touches upon career transition and ways to contribute beyond one's career. It has been a pleasure to be of assistance to this project!

Kevin Kilty
Chairman, ISSF Coach Advisory Committee

SPORT IN THE CONTEXT OF LIFE - BY NICCOLÒ CAMPRIANI

My initiation to shooting sport happened at a small shooting range in the countryside near Tuscany in 2000, where I began to practice with a pistol along with my dad. Little did I know then, that this would mark the beginning of a long and beautiful journey through the sport! From winning a silver medal at the European Junior Championship at Gothenburg in 2003 as a sixteen-year-old to winning two gold medals at the Rio Olympics in 2016, the sport has not only given me moments to cherish but has also enabled me to become a better person along the way.



My sporting career has been a roller-coaster. The things that I have loved the most have turned out, at times, to be the things that I despise the most. It has been intense and there were days that put my commitment to test. Having acknowledged this early in my career, I began to make a conscious effort to put the sport in the context of life. This meant that I have focused more on enjoying the process of becoming better, both as an athlete and as an individual. The outcome at major competitions like the World Championships and the Olympic Games has always been just the consequence of that process.

Athletes get so involved in training and competition that they tend to underestimate the influence they have on society. A fellow athlete and dear friend of mine used to tell me that when we become 'Olympians' it is not up to us to decide whether we are role models or not. We are role models, period. The only choice that we have is what kind of role models we want to be. The responsibility that comes with such a realization could feel overwhelming but it provides a great chance to make a difference to others.

In my opinion, there is no specific way or formula to be a good role model or an ambassador of the sport. Rather, being an ambassador is a mindset. It's about constantly conducting oneself in accordance with one's persona as an influential member of the shooting community as well as of the society. Personally, I have tried to leave a mark on the younger athlete by conducting myself well and devoting some time to interact with them. It could be a matter of a few minutes but can leave a lasting impression.

The ability to inspire others depends on how well one is taking care of oneself. I have been able to do so by developing my identity outside of the sport. I ensured that my passion for the sport never became an obsession. People often say that winning a medal at the Olympic Games is the ultimate source of happiness. For me, it has been the opposite. Only when I was happy and content with myself, was I able to win a medal. I tried various methods to make this happen and they mostly involved aspects unrelated to the sport.

It is unfortunate that there is prejudice against pursuing education and alternate livelihoods while participating in sport. Pursuing my graduate and post-graduate degrees, followed by my part-time job at Ferrari, assisted me to enjoy my preparation routines better. In fact, it helped me establish that the outcome of competitions would not determine the future possibilities. Knowing this at the Olympic finals, I was able to shoot the last shot with much more confidence!

Through my career, I have gained much from the people around me and I feel the need to sincerely give back. There are many values and skills that I have picked up. I have learnt to recognize the right kind of people to spend time with and always absorb things that are useful to me. The sport has also made me kinder and more generous. It has given me a chance to be a part of large community of athletes who trust and support each other. I have also been privileged to be publicly recognized by them through the ISSF Shooter of the Year award, which I won twice. Clearly, the legacy of the sport goes beyond the victories and the joy that comes with it. It has really helped to manage my life, make life-long relationships and see things from a rational perspective. I have expended time to reflect and recognize these things and this, in turn, motivates me to support and inspire others to the best of my abilities.

When I began shooting with a rifle, there was no coach. My dad and I used to refer to a book to learn the basics. The book was in a language I could not understand, but we still managed to make use of it by improvising and finding creative solutions. In that sense, resources such as this handbook can be really useful. I hope that athletes around the world can absorb relevant aspects from the book and use it in unique ways to pursue a successful life. I humbly wish you all, the very best!



PART I - MAKING YOUR BODY WORK FOR YOU

SECTION 1: 10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR BODY

Introduction

Shooting sport involves the execution of several discrete skills that require fine motor control. Performance is dependent on the peak abilities of the smallest muscle groups. Flexibility and core strength are of particular importance in the sport. The sport, therefore, demands specialized training routines that are tailored to meet individual needs.

To get the best out of your body, it is essential that you have a basic understanding of the different components of the human body and how they work together. There are various concepts in Sports Physiology that can enable you to monitor the changes occurring in your body, evaluate the training methods used and modify these methods to meet specific needs. This can help you to be in a better position to develop the muscle memories required to reproduce movements without any conscious thought. It can also help you to improve your balance and stability.

You may have a lot of questions pertaining to your body and its functions. You may have wondered, “What is the meaning of bio-mechanics and centre of gravity?”, “How do I improve my balance and stability?”, “What is the role of sleep?” and “Can sleep deprivation actually hamper my performance?”. This section provides answers to these questions. Reading through it will help you make informed choices and be better prepared for the physical challenges in your career.



1. What is the human body made of and what roles do each of its components play?

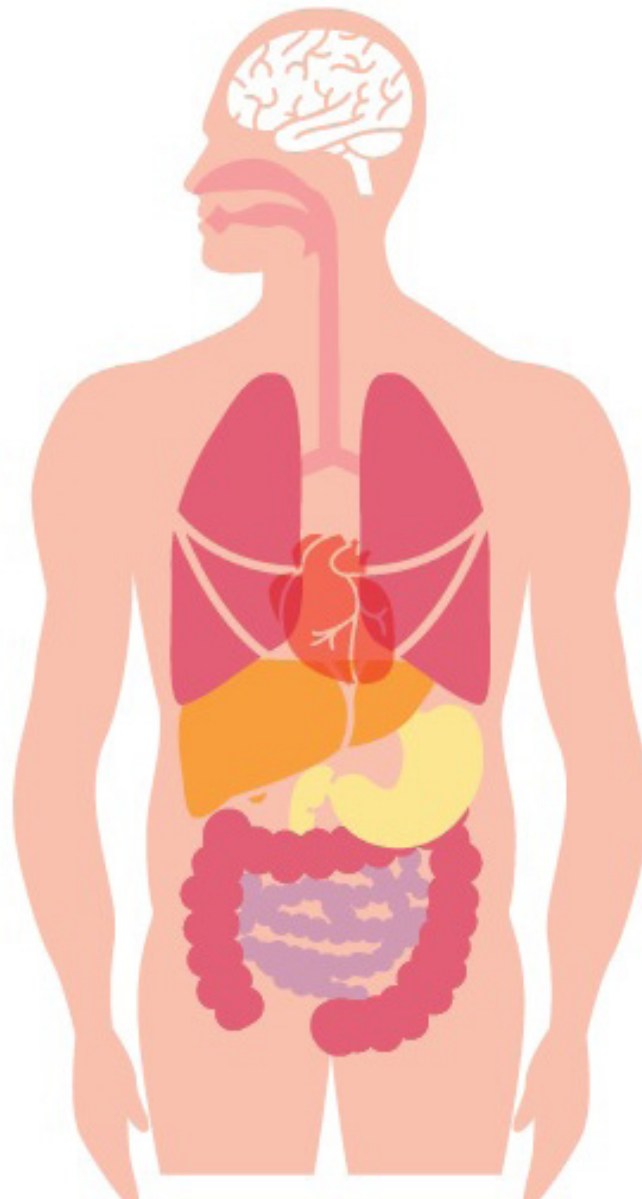
The whole physical structure of the human being is referred to as the human body. It is made up of numerous basic elements like hydrogen, carbon, oxygen, calcium and phosphorus. It is about 65% water and the total water content in an average human weighing 70 kg is approximately 45 litres¹. Cells are the fundamental unit of life. Groups of similar cells give rise to various kinds of tissue groups like muscle tissue and nervous tissue. A structured group of tissues together forms an organ that performs specific functions in the body. Organs that perform a similar function are called organ systems.

The important organ systems in the body are:

Circulatory system	It consists of the heart and blood vessels.	Enables the circulation of blood in the body for the supply of oxygen & nutrition to and removal of waste products from the cells.
Digestive system	It consists of the mouth, food pipe, stomach, small and large intestines, as well as the liver, pancreas, gallbladder, and salivary glands.	Enables the digestion of food & absorption of nutrients required to perform various functions in the body.
Endocrine system	It consists of the endocrine glands like the pituitary, thyroid and pancreas.	Enables the creation of specific hormones required for the body.
Musculoskeletal system	It consists of the human skeleton, which includes bones, ligaments, tendons, and attached muscles.	Gives the body its basic structure and the ability to move.
Nervous system	It consists of the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord) and the peripheral nervous system (the nerves).	Helps the body to coordinate with the various systems and respond to the environment.
Reproductive system	It consists of the internal and external sex organs.	Involved with conception and reproduction.

Respiratory system	It consists of the nose, windpipe, and lungs.	Enables the circulation of oxygen in the body through breathing.
Urinary system	It consists of the kidneys, bladder, and urethra.	Enables the purification of the blood by removal of excess salts, water & waste products from the body.

While all the organ systems must work together, training the body primarily leads to changes and adaptation in the nervous, musculoskeletal, respiratory and circulatory systems – commonly referred to as neuro-muscular and cardio-respiratory adaptations.



2. What phases of growth does the body go through and at what ages?

Understanding the phases of growth is important while developing the training routine that is appropriate to one's age. The most basic aspect of growth is the production of new cells in the body. As the number of cells increases, the amount of tissue and the size of the organs also increase. There is a high rate of production of new cells during early phases of growth and this stabilizes during the last phases of growth. The rate of production gradually goes down leading to failure of some organs and eventually, death.

Here are the several phases of growth that the body goes through during a typical sports career:

Infancy	This phase occurs between the ages of 0 and 3. The highest rate of growth occurs during infancy and all the organ systems gradually develop. Generally, by the end of the first year, the average baby is twice its height and three times its weight.
Childhood	This phase occurs between the ages of 3 and 11. Here the rate of growth is high, and the abilities of the body slowly increase. The mind collects memories and patterns to guide the body for all future purposes and experiences. This is an extremely important phase for a child to be skilled with 'motor competence' and to be introduced to simple sport-specific skills.
Adolescence	This phase occurs between the ages of 11 and 20. Here the rate of growth reduces and mainly revolves around the skeletal muscles and the secondary sexual characteristics. This phase of growth follows puberty. One will be able to learn slightly more complex and subtle movements. This is also the time to learn proper posture, techniques and advanced sport-specific skills.
Early Adulthood	This phase occurs between the ages of 20 and 35. This is the last phase of physical growth. By now, one would have to be well versed with all the basic movements, techniques and skills but will be able to further improve them. This is the phase where the body will be able to perform at its best, so care should be taken regarding maintenance and recovery.
Midlife	This phase occurs between ages of 35 and 45. There is minimum growth in the body. The capacity of the lungs decreases, and the metabolic rate gradually slows down. However, one has a deeper understanding of the abilities of the mind and body. In sport, this is usually the phase during which one retires, and special attention must be given to mental health.

3. What are the various stages of learning and how does that influence scheduling of practice?

As an athlete gets involved in learning and training for a sport, he or she goes through several stages of learning before mastering a skill or a combination of skills. Being aware of these stages helps one to set realistic goals and seek the ideal coaching environment that can ensure peak performance.

Learning involves coordination of the mind and the body and leads to the development of several skills – most importantly the motor skills. The notion of skill is different from ability and it is a complex act employed to achieve a specific goal. The motor skills primarily involve three aspects²:

- **The cognitive component** – deciding what to do to attain the performance goal.
- **The perceptual component** – deciding where and when to do it based on cues from the environment.
- **The movement component** – deciding how to do it (e.g., how to organize muscle activity for the required actions).

As one endeavours to hone motor skills, one goes through various stages of learning²:

- **The Cognitive stage** - where one learns the basic movements but generally struggles to grasp the required effort to execute the skill entirely.

- **The Associative stage** - where the need to control every aspect of the action is gradually reduced and the movements become consistent, precise, economical and effective.
- **The Autonomous stage** - where the movement coordination and ease of adaptability are high and one performs most tasks automatically without paying specific attention.

Practice is fundamental to learning and the focus needs to be on the quality of practice experiences rather than mindless repetition of tasks. The rate at which learning occurs diminishes over time and it is crucial that initial phases are undertaken at a young age and lead to substantial improvement in skill level. The goal should be long-term adaptations and not short-term performances.

While scheduling practice sessions, it is in your best interest to acknowledge the various learning stages as well as other factors like your age, abilities, experience and motivation. There are various practice scheduling strategies; the awareness and usage of these strategies can enable maximum utilization of the time that you dedicate to training.



4. How does training the body help improve performance?

Training refers to learning and performing a skill or movement while practice refers to applying the skill based on a desired field of interest. Depending on the way the practice sessions are scheduled, training routines lead to definite improvement in an athlete's ability to excel at the sport. Training and practice are mainly undertaken to acquire motor skills, condition the body and then develop the sport-specific skills.

Practice sessions in shooting sport require the body to be trained in a certain manner. There are three basic components at any training session – preparing the body through warm-up, the conditioning or technical phase and gradual recovery through cool-down. Warm-ups and cool-downs enable the metabolic and cardiorespiratory adjustments that are required as one moves from rest to training and vice-versa.

Training and conditioning the body is dependent on a few main principles³:

- **Adaptability:** The body gradually adapts to any training routine through adjustments in organ systems and enzyme levels.
- **Overload:** To enable improvement, one must progressively increase or modify the training load based on its four dimensions – frequency, intensity, time and type.
- **Specificity:** the adaptations in the body are always specific to the type of training; it is desirable for the routine to mimic actual activity as much as possible.
- **Reversibility:** the adaptations to the body would be lost and reversed in case of a break from regular training activity (can be captured through the phrase - “use it or lose it”).

A training pattern could be either aerobic (with a focus on endurance) or anaerobic (with a focus on power). While both the patterns lead to many desired improvements, the former is more

beneficial for athletes in shooting sport to build stamina as training for size or power could prove counter-productive. Anaerobic training, if done, should be specific to the needs of the discipline involved⁴.

It is ideal to start with assessments with respect to strength, mobility, flexibility, stability and balance in order to develop an individualized routine that is also specific to the needs of the sport. Strength training is best done off-season and one could just focus on maintenance during the competitive season.

Regular training and practice results in the development of muscle memory (neuromuscular memory). It refers to the ability of the body to reproduce a movement without conscious thought. The muscles get so used to performing a task that one can carry it out without being mentally focused on it. To build good muscle memories, you must focus on the quality of the training routines and pay careful attention to the techniques and movements involved. Several training routines can be sport specific and involve movements that you are likely to use in competition. Once established, the muscle memories improve the ability to take correct decisions quickly and automatically which, in turn, improves performance.

Athletes in the rifle discipline need to focus on building the strength of the core stabilizing muscles while improving overall flexibility. Athletes in the pistol discipline need to focus on building the strength of the upper extremity and core stabilizing muscles while improving endurance strength of the legs. Athletes in the shotgun discipline need to focus on bilateral shoulder and total body strengthening at moderate levels to develop the overall strength necessary to repeatedly lift and absorb the recoil from their gun.

5. What is meant by bio-mechanics and centre of gravity?

Bio-mechanics involves the study of the structures and functions of biological systems from the point of view of mechanics. Mechanics is an area of science that studies the behaviour of bodies when subjected to forces and displacement. Bio-mechanics, therefore, is largely concerned with the effects produced by forces on the human body⁵.

Such forces can be categorised as:

- **Internal:** produced within the body due to muscular contractions.
- **External:** those acting on the body as it moves or attempts to stay in a state of rest.

The analysis of forces and movements involved with the human body is referred to as biomechanical analysis. This involves the study of running style, walking style, posture and sport specific techniques. It can help you to understand how and why bodies and objects move in the sporting environment and make subtle adjustments. This can lead to improved performance and reduce the risk of injury.

Centre of Gravity (CoG) is one of the key concepts involved in bio-mechanics. It is a theoretical point where a body's mass is equally balanced. It is the balance point of a body through which gravity acts because of which there is an equal weight force on both sides⁶. CoG in the human body depends on the muscle mass and the position of limbs with respect to the torso. Since the top half of the body contains 60% of the body mass, it is observed that the CoG is not located at the central point of the body and often hovers around the navel⁷. Moreover, the CoG for women is slightly lower than that for men due to a slight difference in the structure of the pelvic bone.

Centre of Gravity influences the overall stability of the shooting stance. A lower CoG enables greater control and a wider range of motions.

As you hold your firearm in the rifle and pistol disciplines, the CoG of the firearm should ideally coincide with the CoG of the body. A new CoG is created for the body-firearm system and if it is too far away from the original CoG of the body, it causes strain on the balancing muscles causing undesired sway⁸. You could use your skeleton as much as possible and activate only those muscles that you are sure to use; this can eliminate sway and prevents muscle fatigue. However, you should be careful about protecting your facet joints at the back from injury due to overload, especially since the number of shots to be fired in the competition have increased.



Within the shotgun disciplines, the CoG is dynamic and will shift as the athlete rotates and pushes the gun forwards towards the target. The essence of managing the CoG in shotgun shooting is to maintain as small a circle of CoG as is possible. Some shooting techniques will see a wider or oval shape to the CoG but essentially the performance of the technique is dependent on having a tight CoG.



Regular training and practice results in the development of muscle memory. It refers to the ability of the body to reproduce a movement without conscious thought. The muscles get so used to performing a task that one can carry it out without being mentally focused on it. To build good muscle memories, you must focus on the quality of the training routines and pay careful attention to the techniques and movements involved.



Balance and stability vary greatly among individuals. It is advisable to go through an assessment by a professional to understand the amount of improvement required. It is best to use mixed training methods to develop your own system of optimum balance and maximum stability, one that is easily reproducible during competitions.

6. What are the roles of posture and breathing?

Posture is concerned with body awareness. Muscles of the body must work collectively to produce strength, power, and coordination. Ideal posture is the means to attain maximum body capacity with minimum stress and strain on the various parts. It is linked to a combination of physical and neurological factors and determines the amount of balance or stability one has while performing various skills or movements.

Good posture is the foundation of any training and competition routine in the shooting sport. Without the right postural alignment and stable platform, the body will be prone to injuries. The process of evaluating one's own posture is called postural analysis, and this uses various methods to do so. After that, correction exercises are used to rectify the posture. These exercises can minimize sway while in the shooting stance and improve performance in rifle and pistol disciplines while also returning the shotgun athlete's normal cervical and torso position.

Breathing is the only function that one can perform consciously as well as unconsciously as it is controlled by both sets of nerves – voluntary and autonomic. The way you breathe influences the amount of control you have over your performance as it serves as the bridge between the two nervous systems. Breathing affects every system in the body - good breathing practices can decrease stress and muscle tension, calm the nerves, sharpen the focus, minimise negative thoughts, reduce fatigue and promote stamina.

Breathing is of special importance in shooting sport. It is commonly noted that breathing causes a physiological tremor and influences overall body movement. The use of breathing in shotgun to minimise anxiety and to provide an anchor point to the pre-shot routine of the athlete is well recognised and adopted in practice. In the pistol and rifle disciplines, athletes usually stop breathing a few moments before they fire the shot. The timing of the pause is crucial because improper execution of the technique will lead to the excessive holding of the breath which can lead to an oxygen debt causing undesired effects. Moreover, you may also need to use certain breathing techniques to control arousal before and during competition. It is, therefore, advisable to devise careful and effective methods during training.



7. Why is it important to consider aspects related to balance and stability?

Balance refers to the ability to maintain the body at rest without sway by overcoming the outside forces⁹. Stability refers to the ability to control the body during movement and resist the disruption of balance. During sports and exercise, these two concepts are usually referred to as static and dynamic stability respectively. While balance is crucial in rifle and pistol shooting to maintain the shooting stance, stability would be important in the shotgun disciplines as it involves quick and sudden movements.

Learning to improve balance and stability mainly involves developing the ability to maintain the body's Centre of Gravity over the base of support during a wide range of motions. This depends on the combination of sensory systems and motor functions.

The sensory systems involve the visual, vestibular (inner ear) and the proprioceptive systems (ligaments, tendons, muscle and joint capsules) all of which, send information to the central nervous system⁹. The motor functions involve the postural alignment of the body based on the feedback.

Even with the correct postural alignment, there is a natural tendency of the body to sway as the musculoskeletal system cannot by itself maintain a constant tension at all times. But specific training through balance exercises can minimize and even eliminate this sway which is very beneficial in the pistol and rifle disciplines. Balance in shotgun is a dynamic model and will change throughout the performance of the shot. Here, good performance is dependent on the stability of the athlete involved. The balance must be maintained through a stable position that does not extend beyond the base of support created by the foot position of the athlete. Should this

happen, as in trap shooting, we see the athlete move forward and at the point of triggering they are out of balance.

Balance and stability vary greatly among individuals. It is advisable to go through an assessment by a professional to understand the amount of improvement required. It is best to use mixed training methods to develop your own system of optimum balance and maximum stability, one that is easily reproducible during competitions.



8. What is the role of vision and how can one train to improve visual skills?

The mental process of deriving meaning from what one sees using the capacities of the eye, the neuro-pathways and the brain is referred to as vision. It is the most dominant sense, considering that almost 70% of all sensory receptors are to be found in the eye. Sports Vision refers to the visual abilities specific to sports performance as well as the strategies that can improve accuracy, stamina and consistency¹⁰.

Just like the musculoskeletal system, the visual system can be enhanced using specific training routines.

In shooting sport, one constantly uses the eye to shift the plane of focus and concentrate on the tasks. This requires skills and muscular effort. Just like the other muscles of the body, the eye muscles fatigue and this can lead to deterioration of precise vision. Therefore, warm up, hydration and rest are crucial. While the capacity of the eye might remain relatively fixed, one can ensure that the various mental processes involved are further refined. This involves the honing of the visual skills.

The common visual skills involved are:

- **Static Visual Ability:** the degree of detail that can be seen in a stationary object at different distances.
- **Dynamic Visual Ability:** the degree of detail that can be seen when either you or the object is in motion.
- **Quiet Eye:** the ability to keep the gaze absolutely still for a given duration.

- **Eye Movements:** the ability of the eyes to focus together on an object and maintain it even when either you or the object is in motion.
- **The Depth of Perception:** the ability to judge relative distances of various objects.
- **Eye-Hand/Body Coordination:** skills that involve integrated movements of the eyes and the hands/body.
- **Visual Concentration:** the ability to pay continuous attention to an object without distraction or fatigue.

There are techniques that one can learn from qualified eye care professionals to hone each of these skills. Generally, professionals begin with an evaluation or an assessment and suggest suitable exercises based on the results. The nature of exercises required is also dependent on the demands of the discipline involved. Devoting some time towards it during training could lead to a better visual performance where you receive the appropriate responses in the shortest time based on the least amount of information. They can also reduce distraction and competition anxiety, thus leading to consistent performance.

Eye dominance is the tendency for the visual input of one eye to be preferred over that of the other eye. This is very relevant to athletes in shooting sport since they rely on the dominant eye to provide the precise spatial awareness required to shoot. It is recommended that you determine the correct dominance early in your career through various tests available and develop a technique accordingly.

9. What role does sleep play and what is sleep discipline?

Sleep is the natural state of rest for the mind and body. It usually occurs for several hours during the night. In this state, the eyes are closed, the consciousness is temporarily lost and all the muscles in the body are relaxed. The main function of sleep is restoration – a person physically and mentally recovers from all the stress caused while being awake.

Sleep is a very important aspect of training in sport. It is during sleep that all the repair, learning and improvement of the body and mind occur.

Some of the processes occurring during sleep are¹¹:

- Repair and growth of various tissues in the body.
- Release of growth hormones required for developing the muscle groups.
- Glucose metabolism that regulates glycogen levels and improves endurance.
- Consolidation of memories that result in learning of motor or technical skills.
- Stabilisation of the hormone levels related to the healthy mental state.

Lack of sleep has many undesired effects like reduction of reaction times, increase in fatigue, and reduction of muscle strength, lower accuracy,

improper posture and impaired judgment. This further leads to low motivation, focus and stamina.

Sleep discipline is a process of improving the quality of sleep by practicing a routine where the sleeping and waking times are consistent. Sleep does not always occur involuntarily, and one has to make an effort to initiate it. It occurs in several stages and one typically requires at least 7 hours of quality sleep a day to remain healthy.

There are many ways to improve the quality of sleep:

- Sleeping in a dark room or one with minimal light.
- Maintaining a comfortable room temperature that does not irritate or arouse the nervous system.
- Sleeping at a consistent time and place each day.
- Maintaining a relaxed posture where there is no strain on any of the muscle groups in the body.
- Avoiding caffeine products or other stimulants just before going to sleep.
- Avoiding use of a computer or mobile phones just before going to sleep.
- Compensating for sleep debt by taking carefully planned “naps” during the day.
- Keeping electronic devices at a minimum distance of three feet from your body.

10. Who are the professionals to approach for understanding about training the body?

There are many professionals that you could approach and each of them plays a specific role:

- **Fitness Experts:** They can help improve athletic performance by guiding you to improve your endurance, stability, balance, flexibility, strength and power (varies according to athlete and sport). They also teach proper posture and lifting techniques, motivate people as they work out, and analyse performance before and after the programme.
- **Sports Scientists:** They can offer holistic support to improve sports performance based on their knowledge on a wide range of topics such as physiology, biomechanics, psychology and nutrition. Based on their research and practical experiences, they can advise on various aspects of training such as exercise techniques, injury prevention, anxiety control, use of supplements and recovery.
- **Biomechanics Experts:** They provide specific inputs on sport-related techniques, body movements in training routines and the equipment used. They do this through detailed analysis based on computer simulation, mathematical modeling and principles of kinematics.
- **Physiotherapists:** They play an important role in injury management and recovery. They start by evaluating the athlete's needs and then, developing treatment and individualized exercise programmes that are best for the full recovery of the body.
- **Sports Physicians:** They are professional medical doctors, usually specialists in bones, joints and muscles. They assess major injuries and suggest appropriate treatment. They also help to check if you are ready to begin a fitness programme or return to play following an injury.
- **Masseurs:** They help with pain, stress and physical ailments by massaging and kneading muscles and soft tissues, in order to help relax the body. Masseurs also advise on relaxation techniques to help prevent muscle problems and relieve stress.
- **Podiatrists:** They are medical professionals devoted to the study of treatment related to the disorders of the foot, ankle and lower extremity.

While these various experts can bring in benefits, it is important that you initiate appropriate means of communication with experts and your coach. This will ensure that everybody involved is working towards a common performance goal.

Latest advancements in sport related research have created opportunities for athletes to know and understand their physical capabilities in great detail. The range of professional services that athletes can avail is diverse and ever-changing. It is important to stay aware of all the developments and consult relevant experts who can help in creating unique training methods that provide a decisive advantage in competition.



“The reality is you have to have some training, some endurance, using the little muscles, holding the gun and everything else that adds up. There are a lot of isometrics that are involved in shooting as well as the endurance side of things with the running and standing. Then there’s the hand-eye coordination, bouncing balls off of the wall, building that. These are the things that keep you sharp in the shooting world. And you’d be surprised at the muscles that you do use.”

- Kimberly Rhode¹²

EFFECTIVE SCHEDULING OF PRACTICE SESSIONS

While practice sessions are important, the quality of training is crucial to improved learning and performance. The quality depends on the way the various sessions are scheduled, and this requires the application of a number of practice principles¹³.

Distributed vs. Massed: While distributed practice involves longer rest between trials, the massed practice has shorter gaps. The former is suited for the learning of discrete skills which involve a series of sessions while the latter is more effective within a session. Overall, the distributed method enables superior learning because:

- The rest periods lead to better memory encoding and consolidation.
- There is a greater possibility of sleep between sessions, which in turn is required for recovery and learning.
- The cognitive effort required is considerably lower, often leading to higher motivation.

Constant vs. Variable: While constant practice involves a skill performed in the same way in the same conditions, variable practice is a method where a skill is performed in different ways and in different conditions. The former is useful when the skill is highly complex or during the early stages of learning while the latter leads to better memory acquisition and enhances the individual's capability to perform in a wide range of environments.

Blocked vs. Random: While blocked practice involves different skills practiced in definite

sets without interference between each other, random practice is one where different skills are performed in random order with interference. While the former is required for beginners who are just learning a new skill, the latter leads to better long-term learning due to higher retention and enhanced cognitive processing to perform the required tasks.

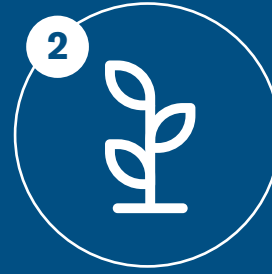
Whole vs. Part: When a skill is performed in its entirety, it is referred to as whole practice; when it is broken down into many parts and performed, it is known as part practice. The former generally enables the learner to attain a better understanding of the flow, timing and outcome associated with a task. When a given skill is too complex, you could utilize a combination of the two methods in various ways:

- **Whole-part-whole practice:** perform the entire skill to get the feel, then practice the individual parts, followed again by whole practice.
- **Segmentation:** perform a skill in parts till some proficiency is reached, followed by whole practice.
- **Progressive part practice:** perform a skill in parts sequentially, where the 2nd part is performed along with the 1st part, till the skill is performed entirely.
- **Attentional cueing:** perform the entire skill but pay attention only to a single part.
- **Simplification:** perform the entire skill at a reduced speed till some proficiency is reached, followed by whole practice.

SUMMARY SHEET



Cells > Tissues > Organs > Organ Systems > **Human Body.**



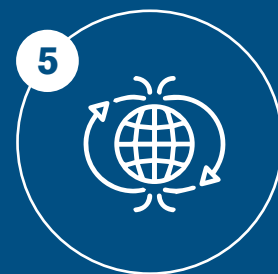
Body goes through several phases of **growth.**



Practice scheduling strategies lead to smart utilization of time.



Each shooting discipline has unique **demands from the body.**



The effectiveness of shooting stance depends on **Centre of Gravity.**



Correct postural alignment reduces **the risk of injury.**



Balance and stability exercises can improve shooting technique.



Visual system can be enhanced by **improving visual skills.**



“Sleep is the **best medicine**”.



Consulted a **sports scientist** yet?

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SECTION 2: 10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT WHAT TO CONSUME

Introduction

Scientific nutritional planning is one of the key aspects to a successful sport career. A structured nutritional plan can often be the difference between a mediocre athlete and a champion. Following a plan can aid in maximising the benefits of training and can also ensure that you are in the best physical and mental state while participating in competition.

The abilities of the body depend on the quality, composition and timing of nutrients supplied to it. A professional sports nutritionist can help you develop and follow a nutritional plan tailor - made to suit your training routine and performance goals. Once the plan is in effect, the sports nutritionist can also help you monitor the plan and check if the food consumed is having the right kind of effect. During an injury or a break, the nutritionist will be able to help you alter your plan keeping your long-term goals in mind.

You may have a number of questions regarding nutritional planning such as “What are supplements and what precautions must one exercise before consuming them?”, “How can I monitor my nutrition during competition?”, “Do sports drinks really work?” and “What is the appropriate nutrition intake during rehab?”.

This section of the handbook addresses these questions. It can help you become aware of how to create and maintain a balanced diet. You will also become more conscious of the food that might be offered to you, especially while travelling for competitions.



1. What are the different types of food and what roles do they play in our bodies?

Food consumed provides the nutritional support to the body. There are seven main types of nutrients that the body needs and these are classified as¹:

- **Macro-nutrients:** They include carbohydrates, fats, proteins, fibre and water. They are needed in large amounts.
- **Micro-nutrients:** They include vitamins and minerals. They are needed in relatively smaller amounts.

Each of these nutrients plays specific roles in the body and needs to be consumed in the right amount every day¹.

Nutrient	Role	Sources
Carbohydrates	They are the basis of most human diets. They are the fuel for all the basic functions of the mind and the body. The digestive system breaks down the carbohydrates into glucose (blood sugar) and the body uses this sugar as an energy source.	Rice, wheat, bread, pasta, cereals, millets, as well as fruits and vegetables.
Proteins	They assist the body in growth and repair. They are used for building and repairing muscles, bones, red blood cells and other tissues. They are also necessary for producing hormones, enzymes and fat. One needs to consume protein every day because the body doesn't store it the way it stores fats or carbohydrates.	Animal products like meat, fish, poultry, milk and eggs as well as vegetable sources like beans, lentils, dried peas, nuts and seeds.
Fats	They help to maintain skin and hair, cushion vital organs and provide insulation as deposits beneath the skin. They are necessary for production, transportation and absorption of certain vitamins and hormones. They also serve as sources of energy.	Animal-based foods such as meats and milk products as well as vegetable oils. Nuts and seeds are a good natural source.

Nutrient	Role	Sources
Vitamins	They regulate all the chemical reactions of the body and are needed for growth and metabolism. There are 13 vitamins and some common ones are vitamins A, B complex, C, D, E, and K.	Sources are diverse; meat, vegetables, fruits, nuts, dairy products and sunlight. They must be a part of the diet as much as possible instead of being taken as supplements.
Minerals	They help the body in maintaining bones and muscles. They are also necessary for making enzymes and hormones. The essential minerals include calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, sodium, potassium, sulphur, zinc and iron.	Like vitamins, the sources of minerals are diverse and are again best consumed through the diet.
Water	Water is a critical nutrient for good health. It is the primary constituent of blood that carries oxygen, nutrients to and waste products from the cells of the body. Water also helps to regulate body temperature.	Drinking water, juice, milk and foods high in water such as fruits and vegetables.
Fibres	They aid the body in digestion. Foods containing fibres are slow to digest and prevent a rush of glucose to the blood stream, which in turn helps to keep healthy.	Unrefined whole grains, brown bread, muesli, fruits, nuts, seeds and vegetables.



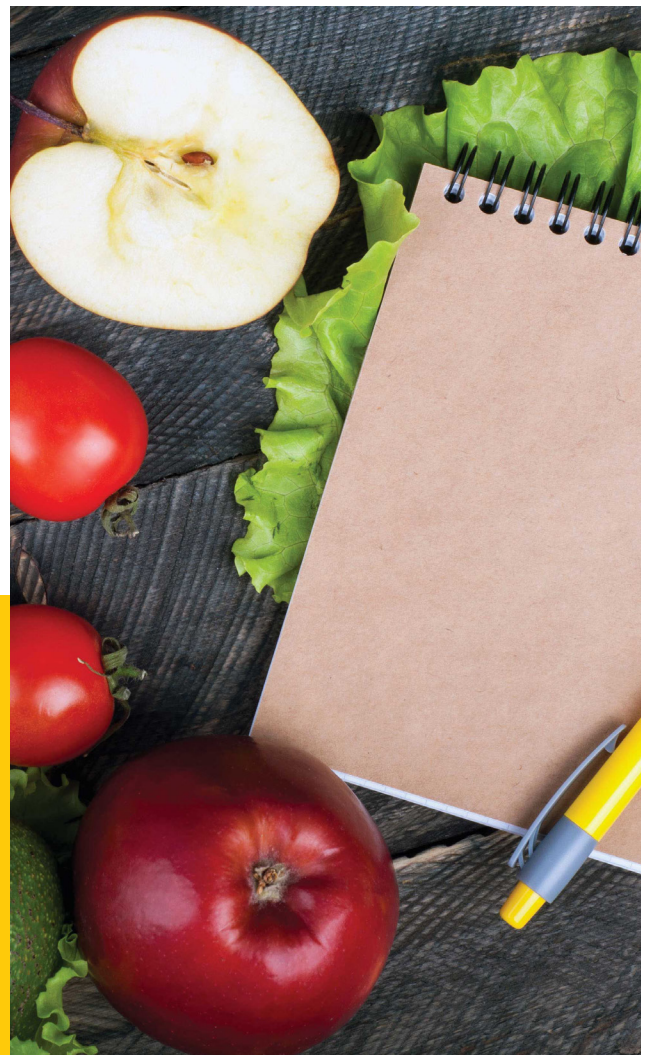
2. What is meant by nutritional planning and how can one go about it?

A diet usually refers to a consumption pattern in which the amount and kind of food, as well as the times at which it is taken, are regulated for a specific purpose. A balanced diet is a kind of a diet that provides the body with all the essential nutrients required for it to function optimally. It contains all the seven kinds of nutrients in the appropriate amounts. The process of planning the consumption of meals according to the desired diet is referred to as nutritional planning.

Athletes need to devote sufficient time for nutritional planning to ensure the best utilization of their abilities. The food consumed needs to be according to the physical and mental demands of a training routine or a competition. Since carbohydrates are the body's main energy source, their quantity needs to be regulated accordingly. Athletes require high-quality proteins (with all the essential amino acids) in order to support muscle development and recovery. Special attention must also be given to certain specific vitamins and minerals to minimize fatigue and ensure optimum body function. Moreover, athletes travel a lot to participate in competitions and need to make conscious efforts to monitor their consumption.

The Swiss Society for Nutrition has developed a nutrition pyramid that can serve as a guide to prepare the nutritional plan by helping one to select the appropriate food groups required for a balanced diet. Once the food groups are selected and the plan is made, a consumption strategy can be put in place based on availability, palatability, training goals and unique requirements of a geographical region. Tools like the glycaemic index (GI) can also help decide on what type of food to eat. GI ranks food and fluids by how 'carbohydrate-rich' they are and how quickly they are broken down into glucose, thus affecting the body's blood sugar levels. Low GI foods usually contain more fibre and additional nutrients, thus offering better benefits.

The needs of every individual are unique, and it's always best to consult a professional for nutritional planning. Usually the professional will suggest some simple tests that can check for the nutrient levels in the blood and prescribe a plan accordingly. Not sticking to a plan often leads to the consumption of food out of temptation, especially while travelling. Foods that include excess sugar disturb the regular metabolism of the body and could further lead to weight gain, loss of reflexes, increased fatigue and loss of coordination.



3. How does nutritional planning help improve sport performance?

It is often noted that a diet may not make a mediocre athlete a champion, but may make a prospective champion mediocre. A balanced diet enabled by a nutritional plan contributes significantly to an athlete's physical and mental health. It can ensure smart decision-making regarding food throughout one's career and increase the probability of peak performance. Moreover, integrating nutritional plans into regular training routines can ease the burden on the athlete to manage intake during competition.

A nutritional plan leads to the improvement in performance by assisting the athlete to²:

- Meet sport-specific requirements with respect to one's physique and abilities.
- Delay the onset of fatigue, minimize the risk of injury and enhance the process of recovery.
- Maximize the adaptations to training.
- Address deficiencies or any other long-term health concerns.

Each nutrient in the diet can contribute to overall performance in a unique way.

Adhering to a nutritional plan can:

- Ensure that the body has enough reserves of energy at all times (essential fatty acids and carbohydrates).
- Improve bone and teeth strength (proteins and calcium).
- Improve the strength and endurance of the body (proteins and magnesium).
- Enhance brain function and improve hormonal response (essential fatty acids, vitamins and minerals).

- Control body temperature and chemical balance (fluids).
- Ensure effective recovery after a training session, an event or after an injury break (fluids, proteins and minerals).
- Improve cardio-respiratory abilities (carbohydrates, essential fatty acids and minerals).
- Prevent muscle fatigue and reduce the risk of injuries (carbohydrates and vitamins).

“Nutrition is critical to my performance, to get the desired results from working out and to allow my body to recover in time for the rigors of the next day.”
- Heena Sidhu



4. What are supplements and what role do they play?

A dietary supplement is one that is intended to provide nutrients to the body that may otherwise not be consumed in sufficient quantities. For an athlete, consuming appropriate quantities of nutrients is necessary, and it cannot always be done through the diet. Supplements can help fill this gap and enhance the abilities of the athlete.

Your existing diet and training goals need to be evaluated before considering the kind of supplements required. A few supplements may be helpful in specific circumstances, especially where food choice is restricted. Moreover, you might have genetic weaknesses or deficiencies which result in the need to consume some nutrients. Supplements can help in such cases as well.

It must be noted, however, that supplements cannot compensate for poor food choices and inadequate diet.

It is believed that most supplements pose unacceptable risks and need to be taken only under the guidance of a nutritionist or a medical practitioner.

Some of the common types of supplements are:

Energy Supplements: They provide the additional energy required for muscles to function for longer durations and develop body capabilities.

Protein Supplements: They boost muscle repair and development, leading to overall improvement in strength and endurance.

Vitamin and Mineral Supplements: They provide the body with various nutrients, especially in the case of deficiencies. These are important recovery aids that will help with growth and repair.

Specialty Supplements: They involve substances and nutrients that are required to perform very specific functions in the body so as to boost overall abilities. E.g., Omega-3 fatty acids and anti-oxidants.

You need to consider the efficacy of the supplements, their cost, the risk to health and performance and the potential for a positive drug test³.



5. What precautions must one take before consuming supplements?

There are various myths surrounding the use of supplements that must be debunked as inaccurate³:

- “If a little is good, more must be better” (leading to excessive ingestion).
- Food quality has declined and is largely insufficient for modern sport.
- Stressors unique to competition cannot be dealt with by food alone.
- Supplements always offer a definitive advantage.
- Most or all competitors use supplements.
- Supplements recommended or provided by parents or coaches are safe and pose no risk.

One needs to steer clear of these popular notions. The suitability of supplements changes from person to person. It is recommended that athletes evaluate which supplement suits them best under the advice and supervision of an expert.

Every kind of supplement poses unique risks:

- Fat soluble vitamin supplements can be toxic unless excreted out of the body.
- Excess use of protein-carbohydrate supplements can lead to diarrhea, skin rashes and unexplained joint pain.
- Alternate medicine supplements could be adulterated during manufacturing or be prescribed by doctors who are unaware of doping.
- Labels like ‘herbal’ and ‘natural’ may not necessarily mean that the product is safe and more often than not, they are found to be unsuitable.

Anyone using a nutritional supplement could be at risk of a positive dope test due to several factors like contamination during manufacturing, mislabelling, misinformation regarding ingredients and overuse. Under the strict liability principle, it does not matter how a substance enters an athlete’s body. While there is some flexibility in all applicable Anti-Doping Rules regarding contaminated supplements, an athlete is ultimately responsible for any prohibited substance detected in his or her sample. Given the various risks involved, the responsibility of exercising utmost caution while consuming supplements wholly rests with the athlete.

There are several ways to minimize the risk:

- Consult a doctor or certified nutritionist who is aware of all the latest doping-related information and procedures.
- Conduct online searches via online platforms such as Global DRO to verify whether or not a supplement contains a prohibited substance.
- Know the various relevant anti-doping related procedures like TUE forms.
- Keep a proof of any concrete caution you have and must exercise such as:
 - A written or email copy of enquiry you sent to the manufacturer regarding if they produce any banned substances,
 - A written or email copy of a guarantee or certificate you have received from the manufacturer,
 - A written or email copy of communication with your national anti-doping organization seeking their advice.
- Follow a nutritious or a balanced diet that enables to minimize or eliminate reliance on supplements.



A balanced diet enabled by a nutritional plan contributes significantly to an athlete's physical and mental health. It can ensure smart decision-making regarding food throughout one's career and increase the probability of peak performance. Moreover, integrating nutritional plans into regular training routines can ease the burden on the athlete to manage intake during competition.



Hydration is one of the most important aspects of physical activity and involves consuming the right kind and amount of fluids. The functions of water in the body include the regulation of body temperature, transport of oxygen and nutrients and the disposal of waste products. During an event, it is advisable to drink little sips of water constantly through a personal water bottle.

6. How can one monitor nutrition intake during a competition?

A nutritional plan can play a role in ensuring that an athlete reaches peak performance in a competition. While it is natural to be anxious before an event, one must make an effort to focus on what one is consuming. The plan should revolve around keeping the body's energy system in balance and avoiding dips in blood sugar levels. Hydration and protein intake also require careful attention. Even the smallest of gastrointestinal issues could lead to discomfort and a loss of focus.

Grazing is an effective consumption strategy during competition⁴. It involves eating small amounts of food frequently throughout the day, along with regular sips of water. This provides the benefit of sustaining blood sugar levels and avoiding the onset of a sudden sugar dip. It is preferable to consume low-fat high carbohydrate foods such as fruits, smoothies and pasta. Moreover, the need to rehydrate will be higher in case of high humidity and environmental temperature.

Sufficient attention needs to be given to the food being served at the competition venue. Bacteria reproduce quickly on foods kept at room temperature. Foods that should be served cold include salads, sandwiches, fruits, etc. Likewise, the foods that need to be served hot include meat, rice, pasta and similar such dishes. Moreover, it is always advisable to eat at restaurants with a good reputation rather than be tempted by fast food outlets or street vendors.

Sample diet sheet for competition days:	
Breakfast	Lunch & Dinner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cereals ▪ Yogurt - low-fat plain or fruit ▪ Fresh fruit ▪ French toast ▪ Egg dishes - not fried ▪ Ham and steak - lean/not fried ▪ Fish - not fried ▪ Potato - not fried ▪ Rice - not fried ▪ Toast ▪ Fruit Juice - fresh, cans, cartons ▪ Low-fat milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vegetables - steamed, boiled or baked ▪ Canned soups ▪ Meat, Fish, Poultry – broiled or roasted ▪ Potatoes - baked, boiled or mashed ▪ Rice – steamed or plain ▪ Pasta/Noodles - plain/vegetable sauce ▪ Bread - rolls, all bread ▪ Deli meats - turkey, chicken, lean beef or lean ham ▪ Salads - bean, fresh peeled vegetables, fruit salad, cheese ▪ Desserts – fruit and yogurt ▪ Cheese - in moderation

7. What is the importance of adequate hydration? Can sports drinks help?

Water is an indispensable part of the human body and is necessary for almost all bodily functions. The body requires a minimum quantity of two litres of water owing to a limited storing capacity. While it is possible to survive a week without food, one may survive only a couple of days without water¹.

Hydration is one of the most important aspects of physical activity and involves consuming the right kind and amount of fluids. The functions of water in the body include the regulation of body temperature, transport of oxygen and nutrients and the disposal of waste products. When the amount of fluid loss exceeds the fluid intake, it can lead to dehydration. The onset of dehydration is marked by symptoms of thirst, dizziness, headache, dry mouth, poor concentration, blurred vision, muscle cramps and increased heart rate⁴. This is mainly because of the reduced ability to sweat and decreased rate of transportation of oxygen to various parts.

During an event, it is advisable to drink little sips of water constantly through a personal water bottle. It is best to consume water at room temperature since it passes through the stomach quickly as opposed to cold water (or drinks) that take longer to leave the stomach. It is also advisable to drink steadily for 24 hours prior to the event to ensure high stores and effective body function.

Considering that water on its own does not replace the salts and electrolytes lost due to sweating, sports drinks could help. They can not only ensure fluid replacement but also provide the necessary minerals and energy.

Sports drinks are of many types¹:

- **Isotonic drinks:** They contain the same concentration of solids (and have the same osmotic pressure) as blood. They are absorbed as quickly as water and can be used before, during and after the event.

- **Hypotonic drinks:** They contain a lower concentration of solids (and have lesser osmotic pressure) than blood. They are absorbed more quickly than water and are suited for post-event.
- **Hypertonic drinks:** They contain a higher concentration of solids (and have higher osmotic pressure) than blood. They are absorbed slowly and serve more as a source of energy than hydration.

Choosing the appropriate sports drink based on its content is important. It is best to avoid carbonated or stimulant drinks as they may offer significant empty calories and lead to undesired gastro-intestinal issues.



8. How does one keep track of food and liquid intake while travelling for competitions?

Competing at ISSF events usually involves long-distance travel. It is best not to assume that one would find suitable and nutritious food. Care needs to be taken not only during the journey on the flight but also at the competition venue. It is always advisable to pre-empt the challenges and devise a nutritional plan well ahead.

While on travel, one needs to prioritize maintaining glycogen and hydration levels. Dehydration could set in during long flights due to the dry cabin air⁵. Moreover, a change in air quality and climate, coupled with jet lag could lead to lack of appetite. It is therefore advisable to carry a food parcel in the carry-on bag. In case the airport security does not allow food items, appropriate food can be purchased at the airport after clearing security.

A typical food parcel can contain:

- Water bottle
- Sandwiches
- Fruit
- Nuts
- High carbohydrate foods such as energy bars, crackers, dry cereals, cookies/biscuits.

The key to developing good consumption strategies while travelling include the following:

- Planning in advance and investigating the local food culture before-hand.
- Carrying all the necessary medications and supplements along with the respective documents like TUE Certificates or prescription forms.
- Eating and drinking in moderation at the venue while resisting “boredom” eating or being enamored by the temptation of local cuisines.
- Paying careful attention to the hygiene standards, especially with respect to juices and other fluids.
- Choosing carefully from the menu during competitions and supplementing with non-perishable food items that one is comfortable with.
- Acknowledging that changes in the environment could create different nutritional needs, so ensuring suitable changes by consulting professionals.

9. What is the appropriate nutrition intake before training or an event, after training or an event and during rehab or recovery?

Before training or an event: The pre-training snack should ideally ensure that the glycogen reserves are high, blood sugar levels are stable and the body is well-hydrated. The snack should be about 250-350 calories and contain mostly carbohydrates, a little protein, and very little fat. Low GI foods like apples, oranges, grapes, grapefruit, banana, whole grain bread, whole wheat pasta, oats, yogurt and dry fruits are preferable since they are slow digesting; the sugars from the foods are released very slowly into the bloodstream, which translates into a steady energy supply over several hours. It is recommended that one should eat small meals every few hours up to 2 to 3 hours before training or an event, with decreasing amounts of protein and fat, the closer it gets to competition.

After training or an event: After training or an event, it is important to recharge the glycogen reserves, repair muscle damage and rehydrate sufficiently. The intake of carbohydrates, protein, water and minerals should be according to the nature of the routine involved. If you have undergone aerobic or anaerobic training, you may have to prioritize the intake of carbohydrates and protein. Post an event or a technical practice session, it's the carbohydrate and fluid intake that needs attention. You could add a little protein later on to the recovery meal to repair fatigued or damaged muscle and reduce soreness.

During recovery and rehab: Nutrition plays a vital role in recovery or rehabilitation⁶. Substances present in foods such as proteins, antioxidants, fatty acids and vitamins assist in various functions related to cellular repair and tissue growth. The best thing to help speed up recovery is to consume a mixed diet with a wide variety of foods and nutrient-rich low GI foods. In addition, certain supplements for micronutrients can be taken but

only after consulting with an expert. You should avoid foods that can result in inflammation in the body like sugars, fried foods, bakery products and alcohol.



The nutritional requirement depends on the kind of activities that the body must perform. Before training or an event, the body must have sufficient stores of glycogen and water. After training or an event, rehydration and intake of protein need attention. While recovering from an injury, anti-oxidants and vitamins could play a crucial role. Hence, a structured nutritional plan is needed to prepare the body for various circumstances.

10. Who are the professionals to approach regarding nutritional requirements?

The professional to approach regarding nutritional advice is a qualified Sports Nutritionist. Generally, sports nutritionists will begin by assessing the kind of nutrients required for you through some tests. They will then help you to develop the nutritional plan based on the training routine and performance goals. Once the plan is underway, they will also help you to monitor the plan and see if the food consumed is having the right kind of effect. In the case of injury or a break, they will be able to tell you how exactly you need to change the diet keeping long-term goals in mind. Finally, during the off-season, the nutritionist will evaluate the plan and explain the changes that need to be brought in the preparation for the next season.

You need to ensure channels of communication between your nutritionist and other professionals like your coach, fitness expert, psychologist and physiotherapist. It is important that they are all working towards a common goal and in agreement with the training strategies involved.

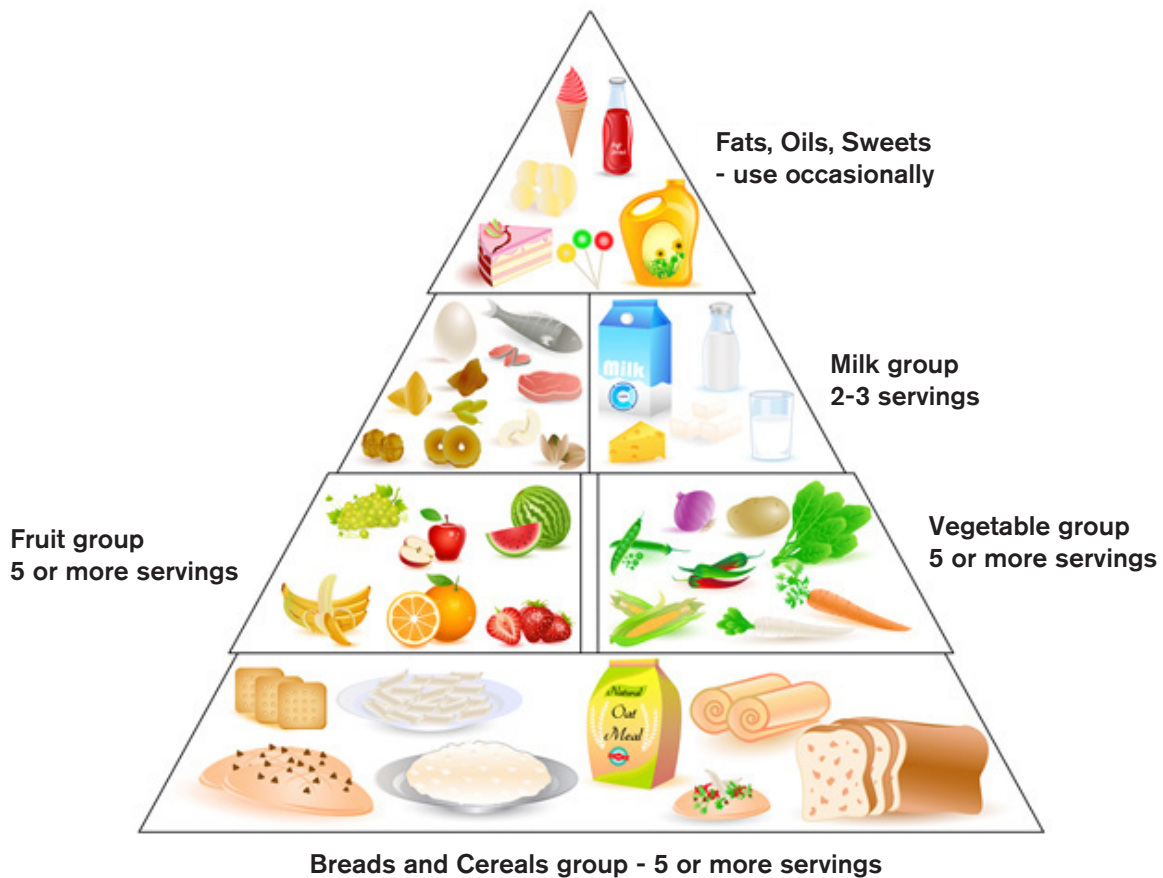
It is also recommended that you visit a dentist regularly (every 6 to 9 months) for dental check-ups and cleanings.

It is important that you trust your nutritionist as there are many professionals with their own views and ways of thinking. Getting too much advice or using diet plans of others will actually end up being confusing and might not suit your body type. Moreover, you should ensure that your nutritionist is aware of the latest doping regulated guidelines and lists.

“Bring enough food to last the whole competition day. Just as in training, be sure to consume carbohydrate and protein at least one hour prior to competing. Equipment malfunctions, late officials and weather can all be factors in prolonging what should’ve been an eight hour into a 10-12 hour competition day, so plan for delays! Length of time between rounds will dictate when you’re able to eat, but use previous experience to guide you.”

- Karen Daigle, USOC Sport Dietitian for Team & Technical Sports

FOOD PYRAMID – DEVELOPED BY SWISS SOCIETY FOR NUTRITION



The ideal diet includes:

- 5+ servings of bread/cereal/rice/pasta. This provides carbohydrates for energy, dietary fibre and many vitamins and minerals. Dietary fibre is essential to keep good intestinal function and bowel movement.
- 5+ a day portions of fruit and vegetables. This will provide a boost of vitamins and minerals as well as dietary fibre and carbohydrates.
- 2-3 servings of meat and dairy products. This is essential for providing protein to build and repair muscles.
- Small amounts of fats/oils and sugar.

SUMMARY SHEET



Each **nutrient** has its own role and sources.



You are what you eat, consider **nutritional planning**.



Each nutrient affects **your performance** in a unique way.



In case of a nutrient deficiency, **supplements can help**.



Supplements pose several risks. **Be aware** and stay **alert**.



Grazing is a good consumption strategy for competitions.



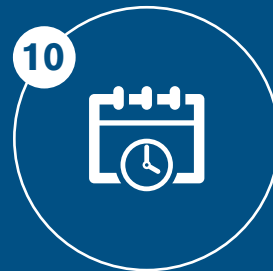
Sports drinks can hydrate and replenish lost minerals.



Plan your meals in advance, before travelling for competition.



Nutrition is an important aspect of **recovery** or **rehabilitation**.



Scheduled an appointment with a **Sports Nutritionist** yet?

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SECTION 3: 10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT INJURIES

Introduction

Injuries are unavoidable in professional sport. They affect training schedules and performance goals. The best way to avoid injuries or to be prepared for the challenges they might pose is to become more aware of how and why they occur.

Shooting sport requires you to maintain a steady position while holding a firearm over extended periods of time. This puts you at risk of knee, hip, neck, ankle and back injuries due to repeated stress on these areas. Many injuries are slow to develop. Others are caused by improper technique or insufficient rest.

At this point, you may have questions such as, “What are the first signs of injury and how can I take precautions to avoid them?”, “What are the common injuries in shooting sport?”, “How much rest and rehabilitation is required post injury?” or “Who are the professionals to consult for treatment?”.

This section provides some answers to these questions by examining various kinds of injuries and briefly describing possible treatment procedures like surgery, rehabilitation and physiotherapy. The section also briefly discusses injury recovery as well as recurrence prevention. This can assist you in being mentally prepared for career breaks if and when an injury occurs.



1. How do injuries occur? What are the common types of injuries?

The term injury refers to damage caused to any part of the body by something that is not in one's control.

There are two main types of injuries – traumatic injuries and overuse injuries. Traumatic injuries are those that are caused because of a sudden accident, impact, fall or over-exertion. Overuse injuries are those that develop gradually over a longer period due to repeated stresses. While you can't predict or avoid traumatic injuries, you can take precautions to avoid overuse injuries.

Some common types of injuries are:

- **Cuts and Abrasions** – where the layers of skin are scraped or torn as it rubs against a hard surface. Usually, this occurs when one has a fall. It can also be the result of ill-fitting equipment. The most common sites for scrapes are the hands, elbows, shoulders and knees.
- **Muscle Cramps** – where a muscle gets locked in spasm causing a sudden tight, intense pain. Muscle cramps could occur due to a forcibly contracted muscle that does not relax¹. Some of the common causes of cramps are insufficient warm-up and preparation, overuse of a muscle (fatigue induced), dehydration/ electrolyte imbalance, holding a muscle in a fixed position for an extended period or neural fatigue.
- **Muscle Strains** – where the muscles get overstretched. This usually occurs because of a sudden jerk, overuse, or improper use of a muscle. They cause mild pain or swelling and may limit movement of the affected muscle group. Muscle strains are graded according to severity.
- **Muscle Tears** – where the muscles may be damaged either partially or completely. It is a bit more serious than a strain and takes longer to heal. It usually occurs when a sudden jerk overstretches the muscle fibres completely or causes a sudden overload that a muscle can't bear. Muscle Tears are also graded according to severity.
- **Tendinitis** – where there is an inflammation of the tendon attachment of the muscle (the tendon is the anchor that attaches the muscle to bone).
- **Bone Stress Reactions or Fractures** – where the natural process of new bone re-modelling (laying down of new bone tissue in response to loads and stresses) is unable to keep up with the destruction of bone tissue from overuse.
- **Arthropathy** – where a joint is affected by a disease leading to conditions like inflammation, degeneration, contracture, etc.
- **Trigger points** - Trigger points are hyperirritable spots in the skeletal muscles². They are characterized by localized acute pain, nausea and increased sweating. They occur due to abnormal electrical activity and sustained muscle contraction.

2. What are the common injuries in shooting sport?

Shooting sport may not be as physically intensive as other sports. However, it requires athletes to maintain a steady position over extended periods of time while carrying static (rifle or pistol) or dynamic (shotgun) loads. This puts them at risk of injuries related to postural stress³. Moreover, overuse injuries are quite common, where the major injuries develop over time after starting out as minor aches and pains.

Athletes in the rifle shooting discipline commonly deal with issues in the knee, hip, neck, mid and lower back³. In pistol shooting, complaints are usually regarding the shoulder, elbow, wrist, hand and the neck³. In the shotgun discipline, ankle, shoulder and back problems are known to occur.

Muscle strains and trigger point injuries are the common types of injuries that athletes suffer owing to the postures and techniques involved. Facet arthropathy is considered to be the most prevalent overuse injury due to repeated or improper use of the facet joints. Most injuries arise as a result of wrong postural alignment. They can be avoided by identifying and rectifying flexibility, stability and core strength deficits through assessments that are carried out by professional physical therapists.

In shooting sport, there are certain body parts that need special attention:

- **Ankle:** The sport involves a lot of standing; the ankle is at risk of injury or discomfort. The strain usually depends on the foot arch and you could use specific exercises to minimize the problem.
- **Shoulder:** Whether it be absorbing the recoil of the shotgun or holding the rifle/pistol, shooting sport can harm the shoulder. The most common problems are rotator cuff tendinitis, bursitis and cartilage damage⁴. Certain flexibility and strengthening exercises can minimize the risk.
- **Lumbar, Thoracic Spine and Ribcage:** These parts usually get stiff, inflamed or adversely damaged due to repeated absorption of recoil, the postural stress involved in the shooting stance and breath holding⁵. Certain core stabilization and strengthening exercises can prevent issues.
- **Neck:** Shooting athletes are prone to trigger points and strains in the neck since they need to keep it steady for prolonged periods during training and competition. While stretching can minimize the occurrence of strains, early detection is the key to effective treatment of trigger points.



3. How can one take precautions against injuries?

Regardless of how well prepared and physically fit a professional athlete may be, injury remains a matter of bad luck. But this does not mean that one can't minimize the risks. In fact, many athletes look for ways to prevent injuries because of the various negative effects they can have on their lives and careers. Injury prevention is a cornerstone of sports medicine.

Here are some of the things to keep in mind:

- **Proper posture:** Learning the proper posture and having the right postural alignment for all training routines can prevent excessive strain on a muscle group or joint and allow athletes to avoid injuries. Athletes in shooting sport need to pay special attention to the facet joints and ensure that their stance does not strain them
- **Sports specific training and equipment:** In every sport, there are certain muscle groups that are used more than the others. Strengthening these muscle groups through specific training is useful. In shooting, the muscle groups that are mainly used are hamstrings, deep hip flexors, quadriceps, hip extensors, hip internal, and external rotators, iliotibial band, calf muscles, chest muscles, shoulder rotators, biceps, triceps, wrist and finger muscles³. The exercises used in training need to be designed in a way that they do not cause an imbalance and lack of symmetry between synergistic muscle groups⁶. Moreover, sufficient attention needs to be given to the equipment and gear.
- **Strengthening the core:** This involves strengthening the abdominals, the glutes and the lower back muscles. A strong core improves overall strength and is essential for maintaining balance and symmetry - the key components to good performance and minimising injury risk.
- **Proper nutrition and hydration:** Proper intake of food and fluids can not only assist in preventing injuries but can also accelerate an injured body's recovery. Moreover, nutrition planning can minimize the risk of injury whenever one travels to take part in events.
- **Attention to minor aches and pains:** Minor pain or discomfort should never be ignored. Many overuse injuries are slow to develop and often start with small aches and pains. One must always try to determine why pain or discomfort has manifested themselves and what consequences they are likely to have in the short and long term. Additionally, it is important to ascertain the root cause as the source of pain can be sometimes misleading. For example, flat feet can result in knee or back pain.
- **Knowing common injuries:** Every sport has a list of injuries that commonly occur. Awareness of such injuries can help to take sufficient precaution and develop appropriate training routines.
- **Monitoring Workload:** It is best to ensure that the body is subjected to loads that it can bear. One needs to always seek advice on a graded exercise routine to allow tissues (bone, muscle, ligament, fascia and tendon) to adjust to new loads and exercises. Most injuries occur when the body has had insufficient time to adapt to an exercise or has been subjected to weights that are too heavy. Sufficient rest between workouts is also needed to enable muscle growth and muscle-memory.

- **Monitoring psychological well-being:** Athletes require motivation and drive to reach optimal success in training or competition. Insufficient focus and ambition puts one's body at risk of unexpected strains or injuries.
- **Recovery:** One should avoid rushing back to training post an event or an injury and allocate sufficient rest period to enable the muscle groups to recover completely.
- **Documentation:** Writing down the issues as they occur can serve as a reminder or as a detailed injury history during your consultation. This will assist your physician to properly identify the problem.



4. What are the various kinds of treatment available to address injuries?

There are several kinds of treatment available to address injuries depending on the extent of the damage. If one suffers an injury during an event, it is best to first consult a medical professional who is available on-site. If the injury is minor, simple first-aid treatment works but in case it is something more serious, one may require other more complex medical procedures in a hospital.

All kinds of treatment are best undergone after consultation with a professional. It must be noted that some treatment methods carry a risk of an anti-doping rule violation (e.g., when Intravenous Therapy is used, when a prohibited substance is administered, etc.). So, an awareness of WADA's Prohibited List of substances and methods is very important.

In case the use of a method or consumption of a drug is absolutely necessary, or was administered during an emergency procedure, you can apply for Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE). The TUE process has been explained in detail in the Professional Integrity section of the handbook.

Some of the general kinds of treatments that may be used are⁷:

- **PRICE therapy:** This stands for Protection, Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation. This is the kind of first aid treatment for swelling of injured muscle tissue in case of strains and sprains.
- **Pain relief:** Non-steroidal tablets, creams and sprays can be used to ease pain and reduce any swelling right after the occurrence of the accident. However, sometimes by 'masking' the pain, you may be worsening the initial injury.

- **Immobilization:** This procedure involves holding a joint or a muscle group in place by preventing the movement. It can help prevent further damage that might occur through movement. It can also reduce pain, muscle swelling and muscle spasm.
- **Corticosteroid injections:** A corticosteroid injection is generally used when you have severe inflammation. It can help relieve pain caused by injury.
- **Physiotherapy:** It is a specialist treatment where techniques such as soft tissue mobilisations, joint mobilisations & manipulations, exercises, taping/splinting etc. are used to aid healing, improve range of motion, strengthen the surrounding muscles, and return the normal function of the injured area.
- **Surgery and procedures:** Severe injuries or chronic conditions may require corrective treatment. This may include a surgery to fix the musculoskeletal system or to improve vision.



5. How can “warm up” and “cool down” routines help to prevent injuries?

Warm ups and cool downs are an essential part of any physical training routine regardless of how rigorous it may be. Logically, warm ups are usually done before beginning a routine, a cool down is done at the end. Warming up gradually prepares the body for the routine. Cooling down allows for a gradual recovery of the body. Together, they give the body a chance to ease into and out of a training session.

Warm up exercises prepare the body for exercise by increasing the blood flow to the muscles to be exercised⁸.

Doing this also gradually increases the body's temperature. It helps to prepare cardio-respiratory systems for the coming activity. Sports specific movement patterns and flexibility exercises like muscle and neural stretches can 'activate' or switch on key muscle groups like the stability muscles of the body, leading to better performance.

Cool down exercises return the body gradually to a state of rest. A cool down generally begins with bringing breathing under control. Stretching of various muscle groups is commonly used to return muscles to their normal length, reduce the chance of muscular soreness and begin the repair process of the body. Blood is supplied to various muscles to facilitate their contraction. Cool down routines prevent blood pooling in the muscles that have been worked. Deep breathing helps to oxygenate the system and reduce fatigue by regulating the blood lactic acid levels. An advanced 'cool down' period is a crucial component of the post-event recovery period and involves hydration, diet, massage, contrast baths and active movements.

Even if you plan elaborate training routines, warm ups and cool downs are crucial to ensure their benefit. They can condition the muscle groups that you are likely to use and help to prepare or

repair them. Every activity requires various organ systems of the body to work effectively and in cohesion. An abrupt beginning or end to an activity can cause strain to the organ systems, especially the cardio-respiratory systems, and put various muscle groups at risk of damage.



“I always try to stress on the amazing benefit of stretching after any physical activity and, in the same manner, after shooting training. Stretching arms in all directions, our extensors, flexors, biceps and triceps has brought me a feeling of relief when I was in difficult situations with chronic pain. The same thing goes with the back and legs.”

– Zorana Arunovic



Since shooting sport does not involve much movement, athletes are more likely to suffer an overuse injury as compared to a traumatic injury. Learning the proper posture and having the right postural alignment for all training routines can prevent excessive strain on a muscle group or joint and thus, avoid injuries. Athletes in shooting sport need to pay special attention to the facet joints and ensure that their stance does not strain them.



Vision plays a critical role in shooting sport. Athletes could be inconvenienced by vision problems since training and competition involve routines that put the eye at risk of fatigue. While refractive surgeries can help to deal with problems, care and precaution can be taken through appropriate nutrition planning, sleep and the practice of certain eye exercises.

6. Why is rest an important component of recovery from an injury?

Rest means to stop or reduce the movement of the body in order to relax, heal, or recover strength. The period and type of rest required depends on the part that is injured and the severity of the injury. It also varies from person to person because people heal differently. You might be advised to rest completely or partially (that could be coupled with training).

Lack of adequate rest increases the possibility of recurrence. Usually, a medical professional, like a physiotherapist, will be able to guide you to gradually change from a period of resting to a period of active training. You may also hear sports physiotherapists use the term 'Active Rest' which means to rest from the pain-provoking activity or movement but continuing with all other pain-free activities. This ensures that the rest of the muscles and systems of the body continue to function normally.

Whatever precaution and treatment you might choose to take, tissue repair takes place when the body is at rest. While resting, you must pay attention to hydration, nutrition and quality of sleep. You also need to surround yourself with supportive people like friends and family who can help you to get through any negative emotions or frustration that may naturally arise. Moreover, a goal setting exercise carried out as you are recovering can help you focus on the efforts needed while helping you resist distraction.

There are two main advantages of resting. Firstly, it immobilises the affected part and ensures that it does not come under any physical strain. Secondly, rest ensures that most of the energy in the body can be used for growth and repair of the tissues. Both these aspects are crucial for complete healing.



7. What are the surgical procedures available to improve vision?

Vision plays a critical role in shooting sport. It is only natural for athletes to be inconvenienced by vision problems. Since most shooting disciplines involve a routine that puts the eye at risk of fatigue, several athletes develop conditions such as near-sightedness, far-sightedness, astigmatism and presbyopia. Various surgical procedures are available to deal with these problems and improve an athlete's vision. However, any intervention must be done with the advice of an eye surgeon or a specialist.

Refractive surgery is the most common type of surgery used to correct vision problems. It decreases dependence on prescription eyeglasses or contact lenses. A laser-based procedure called as the LASIK is the most popular form of refractive surgery⁹. It is safe and non-invasive and is generally considered as a good alternative. Undergoing surgery can improve coordination and concentration and lead to an overall improvement in the quality of life.

After your surgery, you should avoid any vigorous activity that could lead to intense sweating or eye rubbing as this can lead to irritation, harm or

hindrance to healing. Furthermore, you should confer with your treating physician or consult a well-established ophthalmologist and discuss the various options in order to minimize the post-surgery risks.

While surgeries could work, there are several other ways to prevent or deal with vision problems:

- **Nutrition:** An appropriate diet that includes vitamins A, C, E, minerals such as copper and zinc and anti-oxidants can keep your vision sharp.
- **Eye Exercises:** There are several eye exercises that you can use to combat fatigue and keep the organ from harm - it is advisable to warm the eyes using the palms and gently massage it before taking naps.
- **Sleep:** The eye muscles need rest, repair and recovery just like all the other muscles of the body. Moreover, it is advisable to give the eye periodic breaks during training sessions. You should also use moisturizing eye drops in case the air around is dry.



8. What is rehabilitation and why is it important?

Rehabilitation refers to the activity of restoring something that has been damaged to its former condition. In sport, rehabilitation is the approach used for the prevention, evaluation, and treatment of injuries¹⁰. A personal, committed rehabilitation effort can be very useful in enabling one to regain peak performance as soon as possible. It will take time to regain peak form and one should not be frustrated by immediate results.

The kind of rehabilitation depends on the injury involved. Generally, a medical professional develops a rehabilitation plan that provides you with the schedule of recommended activities. These activities help to restore postural alignment, improve muscle activation and reduce tension in the muscles.

Different rehabilitation techniques include:

- **Strength training and stretching:** They help the body to stabilise the joints against the excessive force that they are subjected to, thereby preventing and healing injuries.
- **Proprioceptive training:** This refers to aligning the joint in the right position and making sure that there is proper posture, balance and coordination of the muscle groups around that joint.
- **Endurance training:** This refers to regaining maximum aerobic potential post the injury. This usually complements strength training.

Proprioceptive training is especially relevant to athletes in shooting sport. Injuries to certain muscle groups lead to balance deficits that adversely affect the shooting stance. Rectifying these deficits would require one to engage in exercises that improve balance and coordination. Some of the commonly used balance exercises are single leg stance (on level or unlevel surface), Bosu Ball core balance exercises, single leg reach, leg lifts, standing reaches and balancing on a physio ball¹¹.



A focused rehabilitation programme can improve flexibility, balance, strength, and range of motion, and help you to return with confidence. It is important to know the do's and don'ts of the rehabilitation process and to remain patient until you heal completely.

9. What are the benefits of undergoing massage and physiotherapy?

Physiotherapy treatment is a part of rehabilitation and is usually carried out under the supervision of a physiotherapist. The objective of physiotherapy is to help the body's mobility and includes regular supervised exercise routines that help one to recover well after the injury. By using physiotherapy as a treatment, physical pain in specific parts of the body can be minimized. The treatment can improve the blood flow, aid in fluid drainage and promote relaxation¹².

A physiotherapist is a professional who can help in the development of a personalised routine based on the current condition to promote a fast recovery. It might include both passive and active exercises. Passive exercises involve simple things like a massage, while active exercises are ones that are more complex and need the help of a therapist.



The larger goal of physiotherapy is to improve performance. A physiotherapist will, therefore, always emphasise the acquiring of proper technique. He/she will identify problems in posture or technique and remedy them before serious injury occurs.

Some of the common physiotherapy techniques include:

- Joint mobilisation
(to reduce pain and stiffness by movement)
- Muscle stretching
(to promote flexibility and full-range of motion)
- Joint manipulation
(to reduce pain by sudden thrusts)
- Massage (to ease pain without movement)
- Dry needling
- Taping
- Specialised soft tissue techniques
(e.g. myofascial release)
- Biomechanical corrections

Massages are especially helpful in shooting sport as they reduce muscle tension, promote relaxation after intense mental activity, decrease muscle stiffness from prolonged standing and prevent myofascial trigger points².

10. Who are the professionals to consult for treatment and rehabilitation?

If you get injured, a physiotherapist present on-site will be able to make a preliminary assessment. He or she will be able to provide first aid and advise the coach on whether you can continue or need to be withdrawn from the event. Based on the extent of the injury, suitable next steps can be developed.

The team of physiotherapists may also request investigations (e.g., MRI, X-ray, CT scan, ultrasound scan) to further diagnose or confirm an initial diagnosis of the injury.

Further treatment for a sports injury usually depends on the severity and the part of the body

affected. It is advised to always seek a doctor who is a sports medicine expert through team officials and references from peers.

For diagnosis or procedures related to the eye, you can consult experienced ophthalmologists. There are also certain optometrists who are qualified to provide primary vision care specific to sports and performance vision.

Correct and early diagnosis is the key to a good outcome and should remain the priority. You can't treat properly what you haven't diagnosed!



MYOFASCIAL TRIGGER POINTS

The word myofascial means muscle tissue (myo) and the connective tissue in and around it (fascia). As mentioned, myofascial trigger points (TP) are hyperirritable spots in the skeletal muscles due to certain abnormalities in the muscle fibres. They are characterized by acute pain, decreased range of motion, nausea and loss of coordination². There are three types of TPs:

- Active TP: A tender spot on the muscle tissue that is painful when compressed.
- Latent TP: An area that is painful to palpation but does not distinguish itself as the primary complaint.
- Satellite TP: A spot that develops as a response to an Active TP.

Part of the Body	Muscles Affected	Symptoms
Back of the Neck	Cervical muscles	Limited neck rotation and headaches
Upper Chest	First rib or upper trapezius muscles	Pain during shoulder elevation and limited neck rotation
Sternum (Mid Chest)	Sternocleidomastoid muscle	Pain that radiates through the side of the neck and ear
Lower Chest	Middle trapezius and rhomboids	Pain across the front rib cage and upper back
Lower Back	Muscles around lumbar vertebrae	Pain in the buttocks and the hip joint
Feet	Bones and ligaments in foot (like plantar fascia)	Pain in the entire foot and inner part of the ankle

The treatment of a trigger point usually involves unlocking the contraction mechanism. This can be achieved by applying pressure with a finger or other instrument and increasing the pressure so that the trigger point "releases" and softens. There are a number of variations on this technique and the appropriate one to choose is best discussed with a medical professional.

SUMMARY SHEET



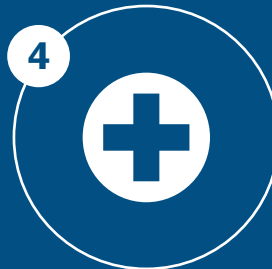
An injury could be due to **trauma or overuse**.



A steady position held over long periods puts you at **risk of injury**.



Injuries are a matter of chance but **risks can be minimized**.



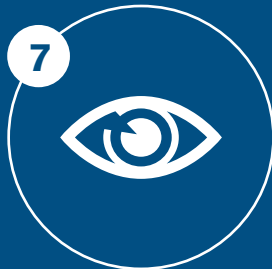
The **level of treatment** depends on the extent of injury.



Warm up prepares your body, **cool down** ensures recovery.



No treatment is adequate without **proper rest**.



Refractive surgery can help you correct vision problems.



To restore your body fully, **proper rehabilitation** is a must.



Physiotherapy can minimize your pain and improve mobility.



Correct and **early diagnosis** is a key to a good outcome.

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PART II - USING THE POWER OF YOUR MIND AND EMOTIONS

SECTION 4: 10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR MIND

Introduction

The need to understand your mind may become relevant to you the day that you begin to participate in professional sport. The way you feel or think while competing depends on your mind. Being aware of the ways to train your mind is crucial to succeed in a sport like shooting which has a lot to do with concentration, control and precision. If your goal is to be a champion athlete, you will also need to make a goal of having a champion's mind. No great athlete has a weak mental game.

Sports psychology refers to the application of psychological principles in the sports context. You might have heard about it and probably have many questions regarding the topic. Firstly, you might want to understand the relationship between the mind and the body. You might wonder, "What is the role of the mind in learning and performance?" Some of the doubts could be "How can I control arousal before an event?", "How can I improve focus and concentration?" You might also be curious about concepts like "imagery" and "being in the zone" and the kind of outcomes they can produce.

Answers to these questions can be found in this section. Thoughts, emotions, moods and memory are all factors controlled by the mind and are explained as concepts in psychology. Reading through this section will help you get to know about such concepts, which you can then use for your benefit.



1. How is the mind connected with the body?

Every action by an athlete begins with a thought. The mind sends and receives signals to and from every muscle in the body. As you stand aiming at the target, your mind is monitoring your body, the feeling in your muscles, how much your body is swaying, and how much tension is in the small muscles of the hand and trigger finger. Consistency in performance is, therefore, dependent on a calm and consistent mind.

The link between your thoughts and your performance happens in the brain. It is the physical organ that enables you to experience the mental states that make up the mind¹. The brain and all the other organs of our body constantly communicate with one another through the nervous system. It is this physical connection that establishes the link between the mind and body.

Mental states based on thoughts, emotions and beliefs can positively or negatively affect the physical abilities. In that sense, the body and the mind influence each other.

For example, the mental state of anxiety causes the body to produce certain hormones that could disturb the shooting stance. On the other hand, developing the cardio-respiratory abilities through aerobic training can help in the practice of deep breathing technique that can control anxiety.

Positive thoughts energise the body whereas negative thoughts could slow you down and become your worst master. The pattern of occurrence of such thoughts depends on certain habits cultivated through conscious effort. Favourable habits can help you to stay positive, which could be the difference between a good and a great performance.



2. What is the role of the mind in learning and improving skills?

Learning is the process of acquiring new knowledge or a skill that results in a change of behaviour, ability and worldview. Many changes are permanent but do not happen all at once. The mind is the place where all the learning is consolidated over time. It can be as simple as learning to pull the trigger for the first time or as complex as doing all it takes to get the perfect score. Any skill that is acquired needs the active participation of the mind.

There are many theories of learning that explain the role of the mind in improving skills. When learning happens by observing or imitating other influential people, usually elders, then it is referred to as learning through observation. When learning happens through practising a certain skill multiple times with subtle adjustments, then it is learning by repetition.

Learning, mostly, involves the practice of activities. The activities could be either physical or mental. They are dependent on the abilities of the mind, like thinking, reasoning, intelligence, problem - solving and having a positive mindset. Through practice, one creates a mental representation of the skill and this gets consolidated as a distinct memory during sleep. One processes these various memories to execute a relevant skill at the time of performance. It can therefore be said that all physical activities are mental activities as well.

The way that you schedule practice can influence the process of learning. Practice is best undertaken in a manner that constantly requires or stimulates the mind. There is a difference between focused practice and mindless practice. In focused practice, the mind is active at all times and you are able to learn and improve faster. This also leads to the faster inculcation of useful habits.



3. Why should one train the mind to improve sport performance?

Given the packed competition calendar in shooting sport, the mental aspects of the game like approach towards an event, personal expectations and beliefs greatly influence performance. You could be extremely talented and skilful, but the neglect of mental training could hamper the ability to deal with the pressure of competition. On the other hand, well-structured mental training incorporated into the practice sessions can ensure the development of key attributes and traits required for succeeding at the top level.

This can ensure that you are able to manage thoughts, control emotions and improve your motivation. You will also be able to distinguish thoughts that are useful for performance from those that are not.

Whatever techniques you might use, the improvement is much better when you are around people who are supportive and encouraging throughout the process of learning. Receiving timely appreciation and positive feedback is an important part of the mental preparation and has

a long-term effect on the mind. Moreover, you should always look to create your own personal techniques and methods rather than depending on others for concrete solutions.

Here are some basic tips regarding training the mind:

- Have mentally tough role models who are approachable.
- Write down your thoughts, feelings, anxieties, strengths and learnings.
- Stay alert as you learn, always look to redirect efforts instead of quitting.
- Stop listening to yourself, start talking to yourself!
- Minimise distractions in your training environment.
- Set clear goals that can motivate you.



4. How can one improve focus in order to concentrate for long periods?

Focus is the ability to control one's attention. For an athlete, shifting focus quickly is useful: observing, taking cues from the proceedings, deciding what will happen next, selecting a response, and the actual response are all the phases which require quick shifts of focus. But the ability to control the choice or depth of focus is something that one can train for.

Being able to recognize and resist distraction in the training or competition environment is fundamental to keeping focus. This involves gaining a certain control of the mind and being able to ignore all irrelevant aspects.

Developing good focusing skills depends on the nature of the practice session. If you can learn to focus entirely on a skill during training, you will have a much better chance of replicating it during events. Developing favourable habits can help in this regard, e.g., paying attention to minute details while learning a new skill or consciously switching focus between various rounds of shooting.

It is important for an athlete to correctly identify the causes of distraction. Sometimes, certain physical aspects like balance or injury could be a source of distraction by causing undesired strain on body parts. In such a case, using techniques that improve balance or address the pain can ensure minimum disturbance while in the shooting stance, thus improving one's focus.

Concentration and focus are related. Concentration requires focus. Focus sets the platform for you to concentrate. It is something you can acquire over a course of time, with practice. One way of achieving high levels of concentration is by practising mindfulness through meditation. This involves conscious and regular utilization of mental effort on a single task or a memory for long periods.



5. What is meant by biofeedback training?

Biofeedback is a technique that has emerged from the field of psychophysiology, which studies the relationship between mental states and bodily responses². According to the psychophysiology principle, a change in the physical state of the body is accompanied by an alteration in the mental or emotional states and, conversely, every change in the mental state, conscious or unconscious, leads to a certain bodily response. Biofeedback is an application of this principle and is used to gain data-based feedback on training or performance through the help of special electronic devices and equipment.

There are certain psycho-physiological requirements that are specific to shooting³:

- Controlled breathing and heart rate.
- No excess tension in the muscles.
- No fluctuation between sympathetic (prepares the body for activity) and parasympathetic (relaxes the body post activity) states during triggering.
- No interior monologue.
- Sharp focus.
- Good reaction times, especially when the target is exactly sighted.

To meet these requirements, one needs to consider several indices like heart rate, muscular activity, brainwave activity, respiration, blood pressure, skin temperature and sweat gland activities. Using various devices and instruments like surface electromyography, one can collect personal data based on these indices in various environments. A training routine can be subsequently designed based on the data in order to enhance self-control or self-regulation abilities. Such a training routine is called biofeedback training.

Competition stress is usually accompanied by changes in the physiological processes of the body. Biofeedback training can be used to attain more control of these processes.

The training method may involve one modality or multiple ones depending on whether an individual seeks to regulate one or more processes under his or her own will. It is best to initially learn basic self-regulation and eventually advance to complex methods through gradual modification.

With improvements in technology, there are better instruments that provide detailed feedback regarding numerous parameters. Training based on the feedback can provide insights about attributes that you weren't aware of or couldn't easily detect. Such training could provide you with greater self-awareness and lead to peak performance.





Given the packed competition calendar in shooting sport, the mental aspects of the game like approach towards an event, personal expectations and beliefs greatly influence performance. You could be extremely talented and skilful, but the neglect of mental training could hamper the ability to deal with the pressure of competition. On the other hand, well-structured mental training incorporated into the practice sessions can ensure the development of key attributes and traits required for succeeding at the top level.



It is natural to go through a lot of emotions during an event. The mind remains as active as the body during performance. Just as one can give the body some rest between rounds, one can also learn to give the mind some rest from the mental effort that concentration requires. This has many benefits and can help one perform well over long periods.

6. What is imagery? How can one use it to prepare for a major event?

Imagery is a method of mental training. It is the process of using one's own imagination to create visions of what one wants to achieve and how to make it happen. It promotes learning through detailed cognitive, neurological and muscular activation that results in better memory retention of technical skills. It can also increase self-confidence and motivation before an event and help to deal with competition anxiety.

Humans create mental images for a multitude of reasons. Structured imagery works because when you imagine yourself performing perfectly and exactly as you want, you create neural patterns in the brain, just as if they had physically performed the action. That memory prepares the mind and stimulates the nervous system appropriately at the time of the actual event.

It is important that you are not unrealistic about the imagery you create and are able to differentiate it from daydreaming. Ideally, the imagery you practice should be rooted in the processes involved and not the result. For e.g., imagining the perfect execution of a shot as opposed to imagining giving an interview after winning a gold medal.

Effective imagery has two main features⁴:

- **Vividness:** Creating imagery that is as vivid or detailed as possible with particular attention given to the environment and on the experience of emotions and thoughts.
- **Controllability:** Developing the ability to manipulate the images at will in order to simulate the accurate execution of skills.

Incorporating imagery in practise sessions requires time and effort.

You can use a five-step strategy to create it effectively:

- **Preparation:** creating the optimal mental and physical state for execution of a particular skill based on past experiences.
- **Imaging:** mentally picturing the perfect execution of the skill.
- **Focusing:** paying all attention intensely to relevant cues, thoughts and feelings.
- **Executing:** performing the skill with a clear and quiet mind without consciously thinking about the outcome.
- **Evaluating:** reviewing the quality of the execution of the task and analysing ways to improve.

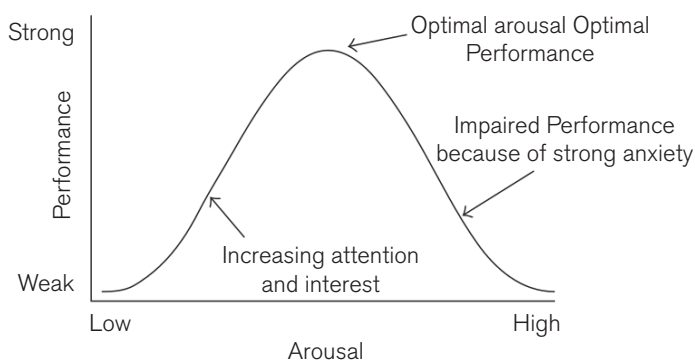
You could modify this strategy based on your age, performance level, specific needs and the nature of competition. Many athletes are able to successfully visualize an execution of a shot prior to taking the actual shot. While this might add a little time to a shot routine, it radically improves confidence, consistency and accuracy. Imagery can also help to come back on track following a series of poor shots during a competition.

The imagination of the correct technique and execution prior to a shot reduces the anxiety or doubt that can interfere with a good shot. Moreover, imagery can be used as a relaxation technique before or after performance, where you imagine a restful place of comfort and your sensory responses to such a place.

7. What is arousal and how can one control arousal effectively?

Arousal is an integral part of sport performance. It is a mental state that describes how excited and motivated one feels regarding a specific task⁵. It provides the energy boost required for performing well. The level of arousal influences the field of attention. A controlled level of arousal can relax the mind and offer clarity and self-confidence to an athlete. Higher arousal, on the other hand, could lead to lowered field of attention, increased muscle tension, reduced coordination and higher fatigue, thus having a negative effect.

There are several theories regarding arousal and its effects on the body. 'Drive theory' suggests that increase in arousal leads to improvements in performance⁶ whereas 'inverted U-hypothesis' theory suggests that improvements happen only up to a certain point called as the optimal point (the position of the point varies across individuals)⁷. 'Catastrophe theory' states that once the optimal point has been reached, a further increase in arousal can lead to a drastic decrease in performance – known as choking⁸.



Recognition, interpretation and control of arousal are crucial for all athletes. The skills to understand and monitor arousal levels are essential for managing the pressure of big matches.

Being aware of your breathing can be a good indicator to monitor arousal. Quite a few elite athletes have breathing techniques specific to their arousal levels which allow them to gradually reduce excitement, slow down their breathing and lower their heart rate.

Good arousal management is often linked to a positive mindset. It is different from mere positive thinking and is a result of habits and techniques developed over long periods of time. Such a mindset ensures that you consistently stay in a frame of mind that supports performance. It can also prepare you for a wide range of life situations.



8. Some athletes talk about experiencing being “in the zone” – what is that and how can one work to achieve it?

Being in the zone simply depicts the mental state of operation in which a person performing an activity is deeply focused and fully involved. It is a state where performance becomes easy and automatic, where emotions triggered by competition do not have any negative effect. One has no worries or distractions and is in complete control of oneself.

Achieving this ‘zone’ revolves around improving concentration and skills to a very high level. It involves the combination of several mental training techniques and the nature of effort required varies greatly among individuals.

There are certain things that you can try to give yourself the best chance to experience being ‘in the zone’:

- **Focussed Practice:** This includes practising skills by paying careful attention to all the technical details to increase the chances of automated response through muscle memories during actual performance.
- **Imagery:** This involves creating vivid and detailed images in the mind about the likely competition environment and actively focussing on the execution of various skills.
- **Arousal Control:** Being able to manage arousal effectively increases the chances of controlling emotions and, therefore, being in the zone.
- **Pre-performance routine:** You can create self-awareness about aspects that you can generally control before an event and develop a favourable routine that can be replicated across your career.



9. How can one give the mind “rest” between various rounds of shooting?

It is natural to go through a lot of emotions during an event. The mind remains as active as the body during performance. Just as one can give the body some rest between rounds, one can also learn to give the mind some rest from the mental effort that concentration requires. This has many benefits and can help one perform well over long periods.

Giving the mind “rest” is especially useful while waiting for your turn to shoot as well as during breaks between rounds. It is important that you do not over think about performance during a break. You should avoid analysing your mistakes and rather shift attention to other routine activities like drinking a bottle of water or inspecting equipment to take the mind off the game completely. Finally, as the break comes to an end, you can gradually refocus back on the game.

This ability to switch focus back and forth is therefore useful for giving the mind rest during an event. Being able to do so actually improves focus, provides the mind-space to analyse the scores and evaluate the strategy. It can fight anxiety and avoid lapses of concentration. Thinking about your game throughout the day may showcase commitment but also has negative consequences by tiring your mind.



10. Who are the professionals to approach to seek assistance with training the mind?

The professionals who can help with training the mind are sports psychologists. If consulted, a sports psychologist not only can help when you are facing difficulties but can also guide in improving your mental game.

Sports psychologists study the relationship between personality and performance. They can work on improving your mental toughness, self-confidence, motivation. Moreover, they can also help create environments for teams that enable teamwork and coordination.

You should keep in mind that you could approach a sports psychologist at all times and not only when you face poor form or another difficulty. Do not expect to receive pills or medication, rather the consultation is more likely to be a conversation.

Once consulted, it would be important to implement the ideas discussed and persist with them for at least 5-7 weeks to see meaningful results. You should not feel disheartened if a certain technique was not immediately useful. It is important to be patient and results will show soon enough.

“A crucial aspect of working with him was that he always let me find the answers, while he was just posing very good questions! That’s what a good sports psychologist does. Instead of giving you the answer, they let you find it. You should be worried when somebody comes around and claims to have the solution! You, as an athlete, have to find the answers and solutions, but let the psychologist drive the conversation. It can be really important, I would never ever have been able to do this by myself. He was an important figure in my career.”

– Niccolò Campriani on working with Edward Etzel



“After many failures, there were times that I felt disappointed with myself. But then I think about the effort and support that other people have offered me. The teachers, friends and especially my family have placed a lot of expectations on me. They encouraged me after the failures. If we don’t feel discouraged by the failures and continue to try, one day we will succeed. We have to find out the reasons for the failures and how to seize the opportunities when we have a chance to take the lead. This is the motivation that helps me to continue to persist and try.”

- Hoang Xuan Vinh

SAMPLE IMAGERY DRILL:

There are many levels of imagery and you might take several days to achieve each level.

Level 1: Object - Begin by imagining something familiar to you, like your firearm. When you have a clear image, focus on the details like the sights, colour and the various parts.

Level 2: Person - Imagine yourself holding the firearm preparing to trigger. Focus on the way you will hold the firearm, your stance, the way you appear and the target.

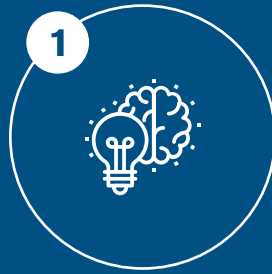
Level 3: Environment - Imagine the entire competition environment during an actual event. Imagine the noise and other distractions, your competitors in various positions, the officials, the scoreboard and you preparing to find the target.

Once you have reached Level 3, you can begin to mentally process entire sequences.

- Using a relaxation technique like slow breathing, prepare the mind gently for the exercise.
- Imagine lifting your firearm and focussing on the target. Feel the firearm in your hand, focus on the sights.
- Imagine pulling the trigger. Try to see where it meets the target and the resulting score.
- Imagine getting the perfect desired score, how it felt and the adulation of your coach.
- Analyse why the shot was effective and resume preparation for your next shot.
- After the end of the exercise, write down interesting thoughts about the experience.

In a similar way, several instances can be mentally rehearsed before the actual event.

SUMMARY SHEET



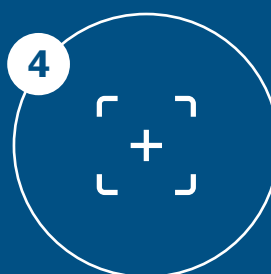
Every action you perform begins with a **thought**.



Physical practice is also **mental practice**.



Want to know yourself better? **Document** your thoughts.



Learning to resist distraction improves your **focus**.



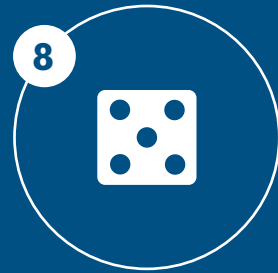
Every mental state has a bodily response, **biofeedback training** helps to regulate it.



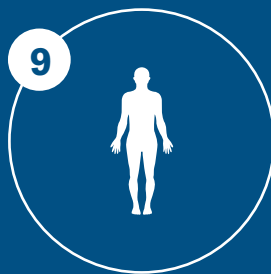
Your own imagination can help you **boost performance**.



Managing pressure requires good **arousal control techniques**.



Regular mental training increases the chances of being **"in the zone"**.



Like your body, your **mind** needs rest too.



Anytime is a good time to meet a **sports psychologist**.

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SECTION 5: 10 THINGS ABOUT DEALING WITH MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HARDSHIP

Introduction

Shooting as a sport involves events that are mentally intensive and require long periods of focus. You are expected to perform at your best every time you compete, and the margins of error are minimal. It is practically impossible to always succeed no matter how dedicated or talented an athlete you are. It is perfectly natural for you to go through phases when you feel low and depressed.

You might find yourself thinking about certain questions like, “Why do I constantly feel depressed?”, “Why am I always anxious before a major competition?”, “Why does shooting no longer interest me the way it once did?”, “Is it normal to feel a sense of emptiness after a major event such as the Olympics or the World Cup?” or “What can I do to take back control of my mind and bring my shooting career back on track?”.

At many instances, negative thoughts, feelings or moods could be a result of a medical condition which requires treatment. It is better to seek professional help rather than suffering in silence. Ignoring or avoiding your feelings may aggravate your problems rather than resolving them. This section of the handbook has been designed to help you address these concerns and understand your mind better.



1. What are the constituents of mental health?

The World Health Organization defines mental health as a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community¹. It refers to the level of emotional, psychological and social well-being of an individual and affects the way that one thinks, feels or acts².

There can be instances in your life when mental health is affected. The factors that can contribute to this include chemical imbalances or deficiencies, bad life experiences and family history. The conditions are commonly referred to as mental illness and are characterised by specific disturbances to the neurological structure of the brain.

Here are some of the prominent signifiers of good mental health:

- The ability to communicate clearly with others and build meaningful relationships.
- The ability to control impulses and respond appropriately to situations.
- The ability to maintain emotional balance.
- Good decision-making skills based on connecting life experiences of the past with the needs of the present.
- Being self-aware without any irrational fears.
- Having a good moral imagination and the ability to work for the greater good.

The human brain is responsible for memories, thoughts, feelings and moods as well as for physical aspects like coordination, balance and body movements. Most of these are interlinked and any imbalance or disruption of one often affects another. Good mental health signifies proper functioning of the brain.



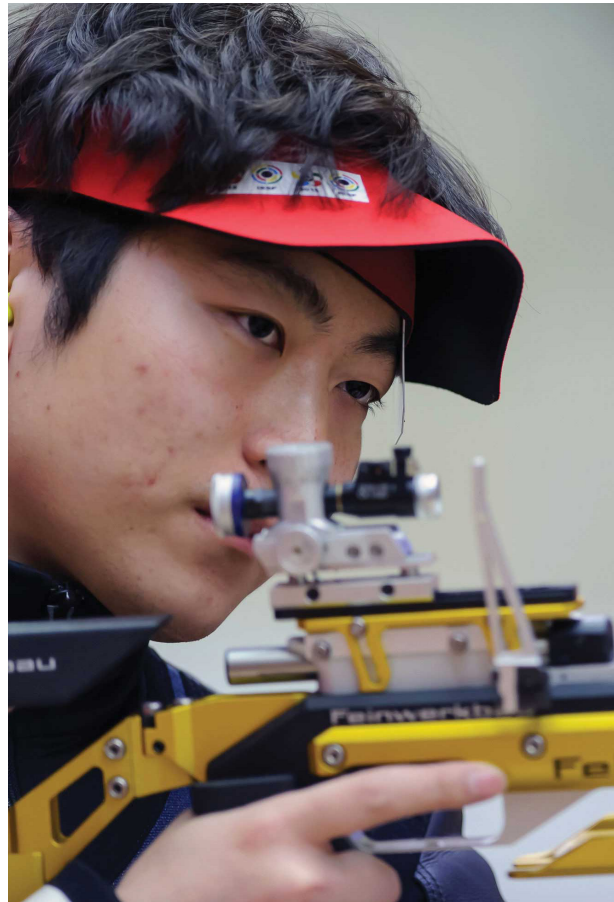
2. How is mental health related to sports performance?

There are certain unique circumstantial and environmental factors in sports that influence the aspects of growth and development. Training for sport from a young age can put demands or stress on the mind in different ways.

As one begins to compete regularly at the international level, these regular stressors can trigger mental health issues.

In a sports career, these are some of the factors that can affect mental health³:

- Physical injuries
- Performance issues like poor form, trouble at beginning/end of an event, inability to achieve milestones
- Non-qualification to an event
- Professional relationships with peers/coaches
- Personal relationships with family/friends
- Continuous participation without sufficient breaks
- Rigors of training and lack of sufficient sleep
- Impractical expectations
- End of a major event of the Olympics
- Retirement
- Social Media trolling and media criticism



You could face a variety of problems – ranging from issues like anxiety disorders, panic attacks, sleeping problems, eating disorders and anger issues to more serious ones like depression, disassociation, paranoia, psychosis and even suicidal feelings. The ability to recognise the symptoms and seek a professional, therefore, becomes important.

Mental health is critical to your success and it is advisable to break free of any stigma attached to addressing mental illness. Most of the issues are treatable and therefore, seeking help is always a better option than suffering in silence. Moreover, mental health professionals not only help in managing the symptoms but also offer strategies to boost performance.

3. What are triggers for and signs of stress and anxiety? What are coping mechanisms?

Stress is the process by which the body responds to a situation based on the mental assessment of resources available to deal with that situation. There are two kinds of stress⁴ – eustress (feeling excited and stimulated to put in the required effort) and distress (feeling negative and unprepared to put in the required effort). Anxiety is a feeling of unease about an uncertain future life experience. There are two kinds of anxiety⁵ – trait anxiety (based on one's personality) and state anxiety (based on the performance environment).



The most effective way of dealing with anxiety is through the cultivation of mindfulness through breathing techniques and meditation. Mindfulness is the ability to be composed and completely aware of the present while resisting any kind of extreme emotions or responses.

Systematic desensitization is another useful technique. It involves putting yourself through increasingly anxiety-inducing situations and gradually arriving at the actual performance environment⁶. Moreover, anxiety can also be conquered through specific exercises which

The signs of stress and anxiety in an athlete can be seen at 3 levels:

- **Cognitive symptoms** - they relate to thought processes and include memory problems, restlessness, poor judgment and loss of confidence.
- **Physical symptoms** – they relate to physiological responses and include muscular tension, sweaty hands, headaches, insomnia and low energy.
- **Behavioural symptoms** - they relate to patterns of behaviour like inhibited posture, fingernail biting, avoiding eye contact and erratic behaviour.

prepare the body for physiological responses to anxiety.

A common approach to coping with stress is problem-focused coping where one tries to deal with the demands rather than the symptoms. Imagery, a technique that involves simulating stressors that you might face in the competition, is useful in dealing with stress. Moreover, emotion management through relaxation techniques, developing a positive mindset and establishing social support systems can also be beneficial.

Stress and anxiety interact with one another. Stress is seen to be the stimulus that puts demands upon the athlete and causes anxiety. For example, a competition is a stressor in itself. Now, this competition can cause anxiety depending on how an athlete perceives the competition (i.e., whether they see it as a challenge or a threat).

4. What are some eating and sleeping disorders to be aware of?

As athletes train hard and travel often to compete in various competitions, they are at risk of neglecting two of the most important bodily activities – eating and sleeping. Quite often, athletes fail to prioritise food and sleep as they assume that they are inconsequential. However, there are numerous issues and disorders related to persistent disturbance to the pattern of eating or sleeping and sufficient precaution needs to be exercised.

Eating disorders are health conditions characterised by a persistent disturbance of eating or an eating-related behaviour⁷.

They offer significant risk to physical health and psychological well-being.

Some of the commonly diagnosed conditions are:

- **Anorexia Nervosa:** Persistently restricting food intake due to fear of weight gain.
- **Bulimia Nervosa:** A cycle of eating large amounts of food immediately followed by compensatory behaviours such as self-induced vomiting.
- **Binge-eating:** Recurrent consumption of food to deal with negative emotions.
- **Pica:** Recurrent consumption of inedible substances like chalk, metal, glass, etc.

The common symptoms of eating disorders include constant anxiety, need for excessive exercise, difficulty in concentration, pre-occupation with weight-gain, dehydration, muscle cramps, dental and gum problems and a compulsive use of laxatives or diet pills.

Some of the causes of eating disorders include false beliefs or wrong notions about nutrition, unhealthy coping mechanisms, prevalence among peers and even genetics. Treatment usually involves medication and nutrition counselling.

Sleeping disorders are health conditions characterised by a persistent disturbance in sleeping patterns.

Sleep is an active bodily process required for repair and recovery. Due to competing demands of time, sleep can become a casualty of tight training schedules⁸.

Some common disorders include:

- **Insomnia:** Constant difficulty in falling or staying asleep, accompanied by day-time drowsiness.
- **Delayed Sleep Phase syndrome:** Tending to fall asleep at very late times followed by difficulty in waking up.
- **Sleep Apnea:** Breathing difficulties during sleep due to blocked airways.
- **Sleep terror:** Abrupt waking from deep sleep followed by a temporary inability to regain full consciousness.
- **Narcolepsy:** Excessive daytime sleepiness or drowsiness.
- **Chronic sleep deprivation:** Regular disruption to sleep schedules leading to difficulties in staying awake as required.

Some of the causes of such disorders are over-training, jet-lag, non-sport commitments like academics or family, performance related anxiety, peer pressure, and excess social media usage. The nature of the treatment is specific to each condition and is decided by the relevant medical professional. Apart from seeking timely treatment, you could also seek the help of procedures like polysomnography that assess sleep intensively and provide meaningful feedback on a daily basis⁸.

5. What are relaxation techniques and how are they useful?

Arousal and anxiety are a natural response to competition. They cause adverse effects only when they are inadequately controlled or lead to unhealthy coping behaviours. This is where relaxation techniques can help. While the body has a natural relaxation response to bring the mind and body back to equilibrium, certain techniques can instigate such a process whenever desired.

There are numerous relaxation techniques and it is best to choose one that is most suited to an individual and the event involved.

Some of them are:

- Deep Breathing
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation (tensing and relaxing specific muscle groups)
- Meditation (training the mind)
- Rhythmic movement exercises (dance and aerobics)
- Imagery or Visualization
- Yoga
- Massage
- Listening to music
- Creative hobbies

Certain techniques can be used immediately before a shot or an event while few others can be practiced during training to address the daily stressors.

The relaxation techniques cannot be incorporated overnight during competition. It is advisable that you select and develop the most appropriate technique over time and with practice. Such techniques are more relevant in shooting sport since there are very few outside distractions in the performance environment and the state of mind makes all the difference. They can also reduce the risk of mental health issues and lead to overall improvement in the quality of life.

Relaxation techniques lead to specific bodily responses like the lowering of heart and breathing rate, relaxation of the muscles, stabilization of blood pressure and increased blood flow to the brain⁹. Such responses calm the mind, increase composure and eventually lead to improved performance.



“I would go figure skate in the morning and then go to school and then go to rifle practice right after. Figure skating for me was always a nice outlet. It was good exercise. It helped my balance. It was a good amount of social time. For me it was something that I loved but it was a hobby.”

- Virginia Thrasher



Mental health is critical to your success and it is advisable to break free of any stigma attached to addressing mental illness. Most of the issues are treatable and therefore, seeking help is always a better option than suffering in silence. Moreover, mental health professionals not only help in managing the symptoms but also offer strategies to boost performance.



Avoiding exclusively identifying oneself as an athlete and expanding self-identity to pursuits that are different to the sporting role is a good way to prepare for retirement. It is advisable to explore alternate interests and look for ways to use the skills learned through sport in other avenues.

6. What are some of the social and environmental risk factors that can affect mental health?

Social and environmental risk factors can play a role in turning individual vulnerabilities into actual mental health issues¹⁰. These factors include those that are outside of one's control – ranging from peer interactions, opportunities to address grievance to the culture of the place in which one trains or performs.

There are certain factors that athletes need to especially consider while participating in sport:

- **Time demands:** Schedules that prevent one from participating in leisure or other non-sport activities.
- **Inadequate sleep:** Schedules that do not prioritise or recognise the importance of sound sleep.
- **Performance pressure:** Could be either self-imposed or created through ineffective communication with peers or the coach.
- **Coaching style:** Training routines that use ego-centric approaches and fail to differentiate the person from the performance.
- **Institutional policies:** Lack of protection mechanisms and prevalence of structures that blindly promote performance.
- **Peer pressure:** An environment where peers engage in risk behaviours or promote unhealthy coping strategies.
- **Prevalence of harassment or violence:** An environment that actively promotes harassment or violence and stigmatises help-seeking.

- **Prevalence of discrimination:** An environment that discriminates against individuals belonging to an ethnic or sexual minority.

Besides, there are certain behaviours or individual traits that could put an athlete at additional risk of developing mental health issues¹⁰:

- Placing unreasonably high value on peer approval.
- Seeking friendships with teammates or senior athletes who actively promote unhealthy behaviour.
- Self-stigmatizing help-seeking and internalizing feelings of shame, guilt or inadequacy.
- Genetics or history of mental illness in the family.

Given all these risk factors, you could make use of certain ways to mitigate any harmful effect on your life:

- Not isolating yourself – creating and building a trusted support group comprising of peers, friends and family.
- Ensuring protection mechanisms in training environment – includes seeking awareness or screening programs, having interactions that encourage help-seeking and ensuring the implementation of policies by administrative bodies.
- Acknowledging that mental health issues have a recovery period just like physical injuries and sensitizing other members regarding the issue.

7. What is depression and what are its symptoms? When must one seek professional help for depression?

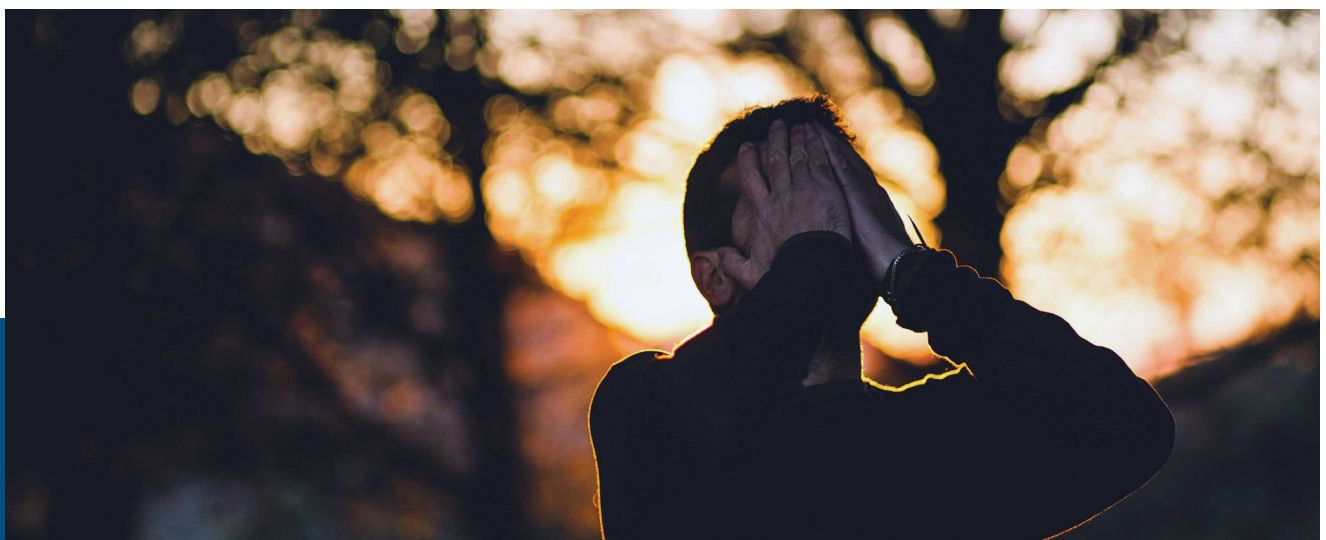
Depression is a mental health disorder that negatively affects how a person feels, thinks and acts¹¹. It causes a feeling of sadness and loss of interest in activities which were once enjoyable for the person. Ultimately it reduces the person's ability to function. Depression is a serious medical condition that should not be taken lightly.

The symptoms of depression can be categorised into four different aspects¹²:

- **Feelings:** Erratic occurrence of sadness, hopelessness, guilt and anger.
- **Thoughts:** Difficulty in concentrating, decision making, memory along with delusions or hallucinations.
- **Behaviours:** Difficulty in relationships, alcohol or substance abuse, sudden mood swings and attempting self-harm.
- **Physical Problems:** Lack of energy, changes in appetite, unexplained weight loss or gain, body aches, disruption in sleep.

A distinct feature of depression is that the symptoms tend to change over time. Sometimes, you may feel that everything is under control but suddenly feel the opposite. If the depressed mood and symptoms last for more than two weeks, it is advisable to consult a mental health professional as soon as possible.

The triggers for depression could be many – poor performance, personal loss, financial instability, non-qualification for an event, retirement among others. Athlete depression is widely discussed as a topic these days and it is always advisable to seek professional help, should you encounter depression.



8. How can one deal with breaks caused by injuries or poor form?

For an athlete, injury presents many challenges. The progress and improvements made in the game come to a halt. In addition, there is physical pain and discomfort of the treatment. At times, the injury could lead to the occurrence of mental health issues such as depression. The prolonged prevalence of symptoms such as appetite issues, sleep disturbance and emotional imbalance usually signifies the onset of such issues.

In shooting sport, every athlete is bound to have a phase of 'poor form' in a career. Moreover, considering that the margins for error are low, it is common to witness an athlete unexpectedly fail to qualify for an event. While one can train to be as consistent as possible, it is impossible to maintain top form or perform at one's best throughout one's career. However, failure to accept or recover from bad performances could lead to the occurrence of a mental health issue.

All unanticipated breaks or incidents pose a risk. The best way to prevent the possibility of facing issues is by learning to accept the predicament and exploring identities or opportunities available outside of sport. Moreover, one needs to access the emotional support of trusted family and friends. Senior athletes who have been through similar phases could offer sound advice which can serve as a moral boost. It is best to avoid the reaction on social media and take the opinion of people of trust.

These breaks also provide a chance to explore several psychological strategies such as cognitive restructuring (i.e., preventing from engaging in self-defeating internal dialogues and encouraging positive self-talk to enhance motivation), imagery, goal-setting and relaxation techniques. You could take a break from shooting, try new hobbies or learn new techniques in order to resume practice with renewed enthusiasm.



Athletes can feel a sense of emptiness post a major event like the Olympics or the World Cup. This happens if the daily routines preceding the event are focussed entirely on the outcome of the event. Once the performance is finished, one might lack direction or inspiration leading to mental illness such as depression. This can be avoided by planning the post-event routines in advance and exploring interests outside of the sport.

9. How can one deal with the mental challenges that the end of a career brings?

For professional athletes, saying goodbye to the sport is unavoidable but one of the toughest things they have to do. Athletes train extensively for years, in many cases, consuming the majority of their young lives but don't anticipate what may occur when they retire.

Not all athletes enter retirement smoothly, and it is common to struggle with adapting to a "regular life". You could find it difficult to replace the days which were filled with rigorous training in the team environment, the time spent travelling and adrenaline rush of competing. The public support and adulation of well-wishers could suddenly disappear. This is a time where one is prone to depression.



Given the risks involved, it is in your best interest to be aware of a number of good practices that are useful for handling retirement from sport¹³:

- Preparing for career transition during the last phase of the playing career.
- Avoiding exclusively identifying yourself as an athlete and expanding self-identity to pursuits that are different to the sporting role.
- Investing time to discover interests in activities disconnected to the sport.
- Pursuing education or exploring alternate livelihood opportunities while playing the sport.
- Developing ways to transfer the skills learned through sport to other avenues.
- Consulting a sports psychologist to anticipate the mental and emotional response to retirement. Using techniques like imagery to prepare for it in advance.
- Expanding the social support group since the majority of your friends and associations will be from shooting sport; therefore, you could feel lonely and isolated immediately after retirement.

10. Who are the professionals to consult when dealing with different mental health challenges?

The professionals who can help in this aspect are mental health professionals. These include Psychiatrists, Clinical Psychologists, Social Workers and Mental Health Counsellors.

Psychiatrists are physicians who are certified in using the biomedical approach to treating mental health issues, including the use of medications. They specialise in dealing with mental disorders.

Clinical Psychologists study psychology and apply it for the purpose of diagnosing and addressing mental disorders using a range of therapy based techniques. Sports Psychologists can also work in collaboration with other experts to diagnose, treat and rehabilitate athletes.

Neuroscientists approach mental illness from the anatomical point of view based on the effective functioning of the brain and the nervous system.

Social Workers approach mental health issues with an objective of creating supporting environments by collaborating with various members of the immediate community. They also work on improving institutional support systems by researching and advocating for policy change.

Mental Health counsellor is similar to a counsellor except he/she uses interaction-based services to address mental health disorders.

All these professionals serve similar purposes but differ in the way they operate.

Mental health is just as important as physical health for athletes to sustain themselves at the elite level. Just as the body needs to be trained to cope with the physical requirements of the sport, the mind must be in a healthy condition in order to meet the mental demands. There are various services, methods and tools available for athletes to recognize and address concerns related to mental health. Understanding the causes of mental illness like depression, developing the ability to recognize the symptoms and undergoing therapy or treatment in a timely manner can help one to have a long and successful career.



“It is a fine balance between passion and obsession. It’s like a healthy relationship where you have to find the right distance. Not too far, not too close. Initially, I was never able to find that balance. So, I had to impose that balance, either through University studies or part-time occupation (at Ferrari). I involved myself in these other things and when there were about four to six months left for the Games, I began to slow down. Not to train more, but just to save mental energy! Gradually, I began thinking about what I am going to do and how I am going to feel at the Olympic final. This turned out to be ideal preparation!”

– Niccolò Campriani

MENTAL HEALTH: USEFUL INFORMATION

Mental Health challenge	Description
Stress	The bodily response based on the assessment of the ability to deal with a situation.
Anxiety	The feeling of unease about something which is uncertain.
Depression	The persistent feeling of sadness and hopelessness.
Eating disorder	Persistent disturbance of eating or eating-related behavior.
Anger issues	Constantly reacting to others through violent or destructive behavior.
Sleep disorder	Persistent disturbance of sleeping patterns.
Panic attack	An exaggerated and abrupt response to a situation leading to physical discomfort and fear.
Disassociation	Severe detachment from reality post a traumatic event.
Schizophrenia	Complete detachment from reality accompanied with false beliefs, confusion, delusion and reduced social engagement.
Personality disorder	Inability to develop meaningful relationships due to erratic and uncontrollable attitudes, beliefs and behavior.
Paranoia	A feeling or exaggerated suspicion of being under threat, fearing the unknown.
Psychosis	Perceiving or interpreting reality based on delusions and hallucinations.
Seasonal affective disorder	The occurrence of depressive symptoms at a particular time or season of the year.
Suicidal feelings	Being occupied with thoughts about ending one's life, sometimes accompanied by a plan to carry it out.

CHECKLIST TO SELF-DIAGNOSE CLINICAL DEPRESSION

Sl. No.	Symptom	Yes / No
1.	Sadness and hopelessness	
2.	Restlessness and easily irritated	
3.	Trouble in concentration	
4.	Loss of interest in activities and hobbies	
5.	Indecisiveness	
6.	Lack of energy	
7.	Lack of sleep	
8.	Unexplained change in weight	
9.	Body aches	
10.	Difficulty establishing and maintaining personal relationships	
11.	If yes, have these persisted for 2 weeks or more?	

If the answer is YES to more than 7 questions, it is advisable for you to see a mental health professional.

SUMMARY SHEET



Mental Health can affect how we think, feel and act.



Seeking help is always better than suffering in silence.



Cultivation of mindfulness helps to deal with anxiety.



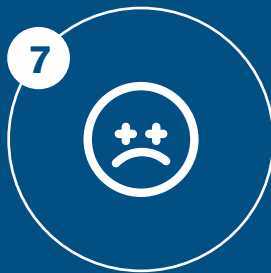
Inconsistent eating and sleeping patterns can **lead to disorders**.



Relaxation techniques enhance the ability to cope with stress.



Social and environmental factors pose additional risk to athletes.



Depression is common; know the symptoms to be prepared for it.



Identify your **support group** in case of an unexpected career break.



Avoid identifying only as an athlete, **expand your pursuit**.



Speak out, seek help and support others in need.

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PART III - GROWING AS A PROFESSIONAL

SECTION 6: 10 THINGS ABOUT COMMERCIAL MATTERS

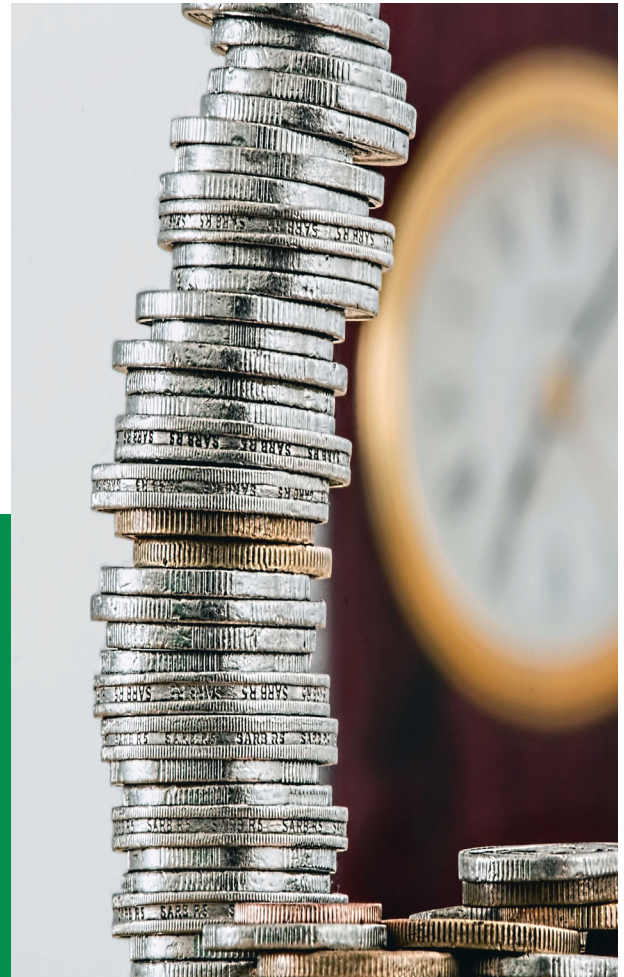
Introduction

For any athlete, sporting success is the primary goal. However, having a basic understanding of commercial considerations is also necessary to maximise the benefits from a sporting career. Knowing about certain legal and financial concepts can enhance decision-making capabilities and the ability to succeed in life.

As you progress in your career, you may be approached to enter into different kinds of commercial arrangements such as endorsements, sponsorships or merchandising opportunities. An understanding of the rights and remedies available to you can help you negotiate the best deal for yourself as well as mitigate your risks.

It is also advisable for you to understand the benefits of budgeting and financial planning for your career. Organising your finances can help you meet all your requirements and avoid stressful situations that may occur due to a sudden shortage of funds.

At this point, you may have a number of questions such as, “What are the different kinds of financial opportunities I can expect from my sporting career?”, “How can I enhance my brand value?”, “What should I look out for before entering into a sponsorship or endorsement deal?” or “Who are the professionals to approach to understand the legal and financial aspects relating to my career?”. This section has been designed to provide you a brief overview regarding these aspects.



1. What is a contract? What is meant by “rights and obligations”?

A contract is a valid agreement between two parties which can be enforced in a court of law¹. The enforceability of a contract is determined by whether:

- The contract contains an offer which has been accepted and provides value in some form for both parties. This can include a fee, a promise to do something or other value.
- The parties involved are capable of contracting and have signed the contract out of free will and were not compelled or manipulated into entering it.
- The subject matter or the material provision involved is lawful and legal.

Rights and obligations form the basis of any deal or contractual arrangement between two parties. Simply put, rights are entitlements available with respect to the transaction while obligations refer to the duties that one is required to perform to hold up one's end of the bargain. Each person must be granted certain rights and fulfill certain obligations in order for the transaction to be successful.

Obligations may vary depending on the opposite party one is contracting with. Generally, one is entitled to enjoy one's rights only if one performs one's obligations in return.

You have the right to choose when and how to render services or to pay for the services rendered by others and you cannot be compelled to do these without your consent. This freedom to contract forms the basis of “rights and obligations”.

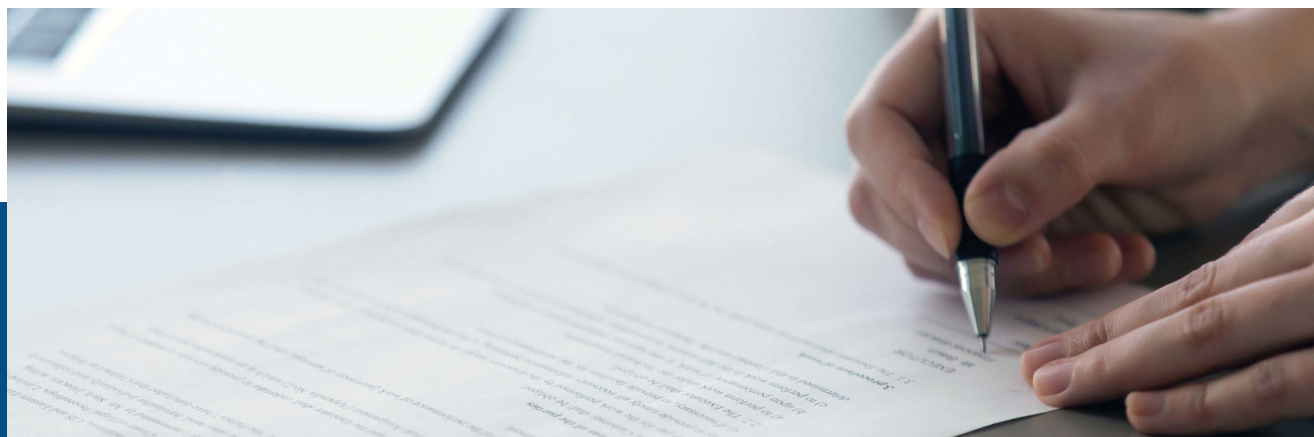


2. What are the different kinds of contracts one can expect to sign in professional sport?

In a professional career, it is likely that an athlete will be presented with opportunities to enter into arrangements with a variety of people and entities.

Here are some typical examples:

- **Athlete Contracts:** These contracts include engagements where an athlete's services could be sought in the capacity of a professional or a representative of the respective national federation or National Olympic Committee (NOC). Such engagements can also be with an event organiser or any other administrative entity such as a national sports funding agency.
- **Sponsorship Contracts:** These contracts set out the rights and obligations of the athlete (often, to use a product) and the sponsor (for example, the payments to be received as well as the timelines). Sponsorships involved may be a mixture of monetary and value in kind (likely to be clothing, equipment or consumables). Private and governmental organizations that offer scholarships to prepare for international events might also offer their services through contracts.
- **Endorsement Contracts:** These contracts govern relationships with the manufacturers/promoters of products or services that an athlete may have agreed to endorse or promote in exchange for compensation. These contracts contain specific responsibilities required to be fulfilled. For instance, you may have to make a commitment to publicise the products and services on social media channels. You may also have to appear in a photo or video shoot as part of an advertising campaign.
- **Appearance Contracts:** These contracts set out the conditions and compensation involved for appearing at events or public functions. For example, you might be invited to speak at a promotional event, attend a product launch or a store opening, etc. The terms of such appearances are established in these contracts.
- **Contract for Representation with a Sports Agent:** These contracts set out the terms under and the extent to which a sports agent may manage and grant commercial rights to third parties². The details regarding the commission payable to the agent for each commercial deal negotiated by the agent on the athlete's behalf are also dwelled upon.



3. What remedies are available if a contract is breached or violated?

Breach or violation of a contract occurs when one person does not deliver or fulfill his or her part of the bargain or does anything that the contract prohibits.

Here are some of the remedies available in such cases³:

- **Rescission of Contract:** The most common remedy is for the non-breaching party to rescind the contract. This means that if there is a breach of contract, the non-breaching party is not required to continue fulfilling his obligations and may terminate the contract. This remedy is usually resorted to in addition to other remedies.
- **Damages:** Any person who suffers from breach or violation of a contract can institute a suit in court for damages. 'Damages' means compensation in terms of money for the loss suffered by the injured party. Normally, a contract would mention the penalty for such a situation.
- **Specific performance:** Specific performance is an order of the court that the defaulting party should perform the contract according to its terms and conditions. This remedy is available in two cases: when one cannot calculate the damages from non-performance of an act that is not capable of substitution or where the breach of a contract relates to a failure in transferring certain specific products.
- **Injunction:** An injunction is generally a court order to refrain from doing a particular act. The court protects the non-breaching party from further harm or anticipated harm by curbing the breaching party's conduct.

It must be noted that the law applicable varies across countries and it is advisable to seek professional legal advice before selecting the remedy that is most appropriate.



About contracts

- A contract is a valid agreement between two parties which can be enforced in a court of law.
- Written contracts are more reliable than oral contracts or verbal agreements as there is evidence of what has been agreed.
- You should not be compelled or manipulated into signing a contract; you must enter it of free will.
- You cannot sign a valid contract before attaining the age of majority – i.e., 18 years. There are specific procedures regarding the involvement of parents or guardians for contracting with minors.
- Understand the full legal implications of the contract; the money is just one part of it.
- Often, a contract is drafted in a manner most favourable to the person or entity offering it. Provide feedback and take it through a negotiation process; do not blindly agree to the terms.
- A breach or violation of a contract occurs when one party does anything that the contract prohibits.
- There are remedies available if your contract is breached and consequences if you breach them.
- There are different types of contracts in sport and you should always identify the purpose.
- Being aware of your rights and standing up for your interests is key to sustained professional success.
- Seek legal advice before entering into any contract.



4. What are components of brand value? How can it be actively enhanced?

A brand is something that has created awareness, reputation and prominence in a unique way in the market⁴. The value that is attached to the brand is usually referred to as brand value. This value is both economic and emotional. It makes the brand special, distinct and creates a certain appeal to the potential consumers of the brand.



Athletes establish their identity and value in the market through their sporting achievements. From then on, they have the opportunity to further cultivate their personal brand using the assistance of media platforms. The public generally connects with honesty and authenticity as much as it does with performance. Unlike performance, these qualities are always under one's control and can help build one's brand value effectively.

With the advent of social media, you have greater control over creating your own personal brand. Regular and authentic interactions on social media attract attention and create opportunities for value partnerships. Early in your career, you may get the chance to work with people and brands that will make you more widely recognised through the media platforms. You should, however, connect with brands that you truly believe in and must educate yourself about their products and services. The commercial benefits that such associations bring can prolong your career and secure your future.

“From the beginning, I knew that it will be important to be present online. I started to build my brand based on what I wanted to be seen as. It’s all about my values, what I really like to promote, what I stand for and how hard am I working. In this way, there is nothing on social media that I might be embarrassed about and there is nothing that could harm my reputation or my sponsors’ name. Athletes should feel comfortable about what they are promoting. They need to be very creative and promote themselves in the way that connects with their potential sponsors.”

- Danka Bartekova

5. What are sponsorships and endorsements? What must one keep in mind before granting such rights to third parties?

Sponsorship is a commercial agreement where a company or an organisation pays an athlete for some or all of the professional costs involved in return for recognition. An athlete's first few sponsors are likely to be those for equipment or consumables. The sponsorships may be merely in-kind (where you are given the product free) or monetary (where you are paid to exclusively use the product provided).

Endorsement is the act through which an athlete publicly shows support for a particular product, service or brand. In return, the athlete gets some sort of 'compensation' (most likely, fees). The brand may use the endorser's name, likeness and image for promotional activities during the term of the agreement⁶. This may extend to obligations to make posts on social media channels.



Sponsorships and endorsements can play a critical role in helping you access the expertise, facilities and equipment needed to excel on the international stage. While you can make efforts to create your personal brand through social media, the initial sponsorship deals will require you to actively seek them. You could take the advice of the coach, connect with peers or conduct an online search to access contact information from relevant corporate websites. While choosing the associations, it is best to connect with those organizations that are seeking to reach the type of audience who are most likely to follow you and your performances⁵. Once a connection is made, initiating face-to-face meetings will provide you with the best chance of actually securing a deal.

Wrong or poorly managed associations could be a source of distraction and erosion of brand value. Furthermore, it is advisable to periodically review the progress of the partnership and create newer ways to develop a partnership.

Early on in the career, you might be tempted to take up every commercial offer that you receive. However, the ability to choose the relationships that match your personality and interests will increase the long term brand value and make you more attractive once you are an established international sports person.

Licensing and Merchandising:

In the sporting context, the terms licensing and merchandising are used to refer to arrangements between sporting teams or athletes and the producers of merchandise and related products.

Licensing involves the grant of right by a sportsperson to the use of the name, image, likeness, or other facets of the personality for promotional purposes.

Merchandising arrangements are generally the right to brand merchandise and products with symbols, logos and emblems, and this right is much sought after by different kinds of manufacturers. For instance, an athlete may grant a manufacturer the right to brand products with his or her name or use a signature on the product packaging.

Aspects to be considered prior to granting any licensing or merchandising rights are:

- **Approval for Quality Control of Merchandise:** This permits you to examine the merchandise and ensure that the quality of the products is to your satisfaction and pre-determined standards.
- **Guarantee of Marketing Spend and Sales Efforts:** An assurance to ensure maximum sales of the licensed merchandise could be sought by establishing a minimum marketing spend, a minimum guarantee in terms of royalty payable and/or a minimum annual sales target.
- **License Fees and Royalties:** The fixed license fees to be paid, as well as the percentage of the profits to be paid out as royalties.





Athletes establish their identity and value in the market through their sporting achievements. From then on, they have the opportunity to further cultivate their personal brand using the assistance of media platforms. The public generally connects with honesty and authenticity as much as it does with performance.



Good financial planning can significantly improve the chances of achieving goals and bring in resources that you did not expect to have. The process should ideally begin early in a career. There are various professionals like financial advisors who can help you with the same.

6. What are various sources of income in professional sport?

The income pattern of athletes is unique as compared to other professions owing to the diversity and uncertainty in the sources of income. The earnings tend to be a bit erratic - income may be limited during the start of a career but success and recognition could result in a sudden spurt in income. For example, success in World Championships or the Olympics is bound to attract media attention and could bring in government cash-prizes or sponsorship opportunities. Moreover, engaging in temporary or long term alternate professions while playing could significantly improve the income.

Once an athlete is established, here are a few common sources of income through sport:

- Scholarships and sponsorship
- Prize money and match fees
- Endorsements paid for with cash, equity or goods
- Special prizes, in cash or kind
- Salaries and wages from the national federation or corporate organization

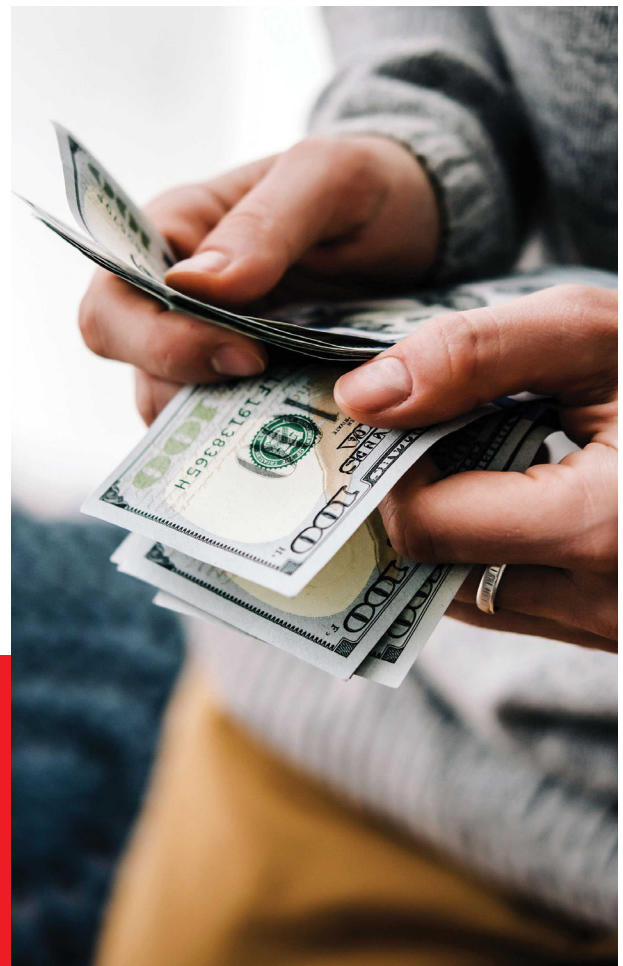
In addition, planned investments can provide for other sources like:

- Interest earned on savings through deposits, bonds and savings certificates
- Rent from any property owned
- Profits on disposal of assets
- Dividend income and profits from stocks and mutual funds

It is important to note that there are a few factors that could adversely affect the generation of income:

- Serious physical injuries
- Non-performance
- Forced early retirement

It is, therefore, important that any money received is managed well by finding the right balance between spending and saving.



7. What are the benefits of financial planning?

Pursuing the funds required for a sport career can be demanding and result in unexpected setbacks. While creating or evaluating short-term and long-term goals, it is important for an athlete to consider the financial aspects. Effective planning can significantly improve the chances of achieving goals and bring in resources that the athlete did not expect to have. The process should ideally begin early in a career to prevent the onset of panic in the later stages.



Here are some of the benefits that financial planning can offer:

- It helps you prevent over-expenditure in the initial days of the career.
- You can organize your resources to meet all sport-specific requirements related to training, firearms, travel and kit.
- It can prevent the occurrence of anxiety and stress related to a sudden shortage of funds.
- You will be able to set specific and realistic long term goals and achieve them with confidence.
- You will be able to provide support and security for your family.
- It can enable a wider choice of livelihood opportunities to take up after retirement.
- It can ensure a good standard of living, during and post your career.
- It helps in minimizing loss of money due to taxes.
- It reduces the need to take large risks with money for high returns.

There are several examples of athletes who have transitioned successfully into diverse fields post their retirement. Having adequate financial resources and using risk management strategies provides the base for such possibilities.

8. How can one manage finances through budgeting and investments?

Budgeting is the process of creating a detailed plan to manage one's finances by balancing the expenses with the income generated. It serves as a tool to monitor expenditure. Considering that the income earned by athletes tend to be erratic, a weekly and annual budget plan can greatly help an athlete to make the best use of the available resources.



The nature of the budget to be created varies greatly, depending on the age, level of competition and personal commitments. There are several apps and online templates that can assist you initially to create budget plans and you could choose the method that suits you best. Budgets not only help to plan and allocate money for various activities but also make you recognise and rectify bad spending patterns.

Investments involve the allocation of money that is done in the expectation of availing benefits. They help an individual to use the resources

There are many benefits of investments:

- Investments can help to earn income from the accumulated wealth without the necessity of active physical effort. For example, earning rent from a real estate investment like a home.
- Tax minimisation can be achieved by investing money in certain financial tools.
- Distant financial goals, both long-term as well as short-term, can be planned and fulfilled through a diverse investment portfolio.
- Investing wisely from a young age can help you pre-empt any financial difficulties post career and enable a smooth retirement.

Budgeting and investments help you to avoid impulsive spending that only brings short term returns and enable you to consider your larger interests.

available at present to avail benefits out of them in the future.

There are various professionals like financial advisors who can help you manage your finances. Moreover, financial institutions like credit unions and banks offer several useful services such as investment advice, mobile banking and loans⁷. It is advisable to avail these services and educate yourself on all tools and methods available.

SAMPLE MONTHLY BUDGET PLAN⁸:

Expenses	Month (MM/YY)	Notes
Accommodation Costs		
Power		
Internet		
Television		
Mobile phone		
Travel and Fuel Costs		
Insurance Policies and Investments		
Loan Repayments		
Food		
Gym and Training Costs		
Membership Fees		
Recreational activities		
Unexpected Costs		
Total expenses		
Income		
Sponsorship / Grants		
Salary		
Investment Returns		
Unexpected Income:		
Gross Income		
Tax		
Total Income		
Income - Expenses		

9. What is the role of insurance? What types of insurance are available?

Insurance is a means of protection from the risk of financial loss or unexpected expense. It is an arrangement by which a company undertakes to provide a guarantee of compensation in case of specified loss, damage, illness or death in the future, in return for payment of money in the present⁹. The specified amount of money paid is called the premium and it differs from one company to the other and from one person to the other.

Younger athletes could select an insurance with lower premium as the possibility of making claims is also significantly lower¹⁰. As one becomes older or begins to face health issues, insurance policies might need to change accordingly. Moreover, governing bodies like the national federations and the National Olympic Committee often create provisions for insurance.

Some common types of insurance are:

Life Insurance: yields a certain amount of money to the insured or specified beneficiaries upon an event such as the death of the individual¹¹.

Health Insurance: protects from the risk of incurring medical expenses in case of an accident, illness, disability, or accidental death and dismemberment.

General Insurance: protects against losses and damages other than those covered by life and health insurance¹¹. This includes property insurance, valuable items insurance, vehicle insurance, etc.

Travel Insurance: covers medical expenses due to sudden illness, financial default of travel suppliers, flight ticket cancellation charges because of medical reasons, theft of belongings, repatriation costs, and any other losses incurred while travelling¹⁰.

There are also certain kinds of insurance that cater to the particular needs of athletes:

- loss-of-value insurance (protects against the risk of any situations, like a health condition, that may prevent you from realizing your expected future financial gains).
- disability insurance (protects from any devastating injury that leaves you permanently unable to participate in sport)¹⁰.
- loss-of-endorsement policies (offer coverage for loss of commercial endorsements under certain conditions).
- personal liability insurance (offers coverage when you incur liability for intentionally or unintentionally causing loss or damage to another person)¹⁰.

Insurance policies come with various conditions, limitations and clauses that you must read carefully and understand completely before buying the policy. The premiums must be appropriate to the risk covered and individual circumstances. Consulting professionals that you trust is highly recommended to help make suitable selections.

For an athlete, insurance can protect against unexpected events and also serve as an alternate form of investment. The kind of insurance required depends on the age and level of participation.

10. Who are the professionals to approach regarding contractual, legal and financial aspects?

Lawyers: It is always a good idea to consult a lawyer before you sign a contract or if you have any questions regarding disputes and commercial matters. Lawyers understand the legal implications, as there are many rules, laws, codes and clauses that could affect the nature of issues and opportunities that arise.

Accountants: In respect of commercial, tax and financial matters, having a trusted chartered accountant is crucial. While you should aim to hire a chartered accountant to help with accounting and tax filings, ideally an accountant will also participate in and advise on the structuring of contracts and transactions. Your lawyers can consult with the accountants while documenting the transaction.

Financial Advisors: A financial advisor is a planning partner. Just like a doctor would do with physical health, an advisor starts by helping individuals understand their financial health and then, suggests the practical way forward. There are many topics that a financial advisor touches

upon including; how much money to save, what types of accounts you need, different kinds of loans available, appropriate insurance schemes as well as tax planning topics.

Wealth Managers: They can assist you to manage your wealth. These professionals are similar to financial advisors but specifically advise high net worth individuals. They are well versed with opportunities, schemes and regulation that such persons might wish to access. A number of banks have wealth managers associated with them.

Insurance Agents: They can help you to select among the different insurance schemes that are available and facilitate the process of buying an insurance policy that best suits your client need.

In addition to these professionals, you may also choose to seek advice and information from other senior athletes who might have faced similar situations, and also team or federation officials who may have experience in such matters.



FINANCIAL PLANNING OVERVIEW

Financial Solution		Savings	Wealth	Protection	Loans
Stage of Life					
Initiation & training	High investment needs with regards to equipment, coaching facilities and training	Low	Low	Medium (For Self)	High
Early Career	Consistent increase in flow of income, owing to representation, sponsorships, prize money, endorsements and other commitments	Medium	Medium	Medium (For Self)	Low
Peak professional career	Peak in income earning capacity	High	High	High (For Self)	Low
Retirement from Sport	Sudden lifestyle changes; focus shift to the family	Low	Low	High (For Family)	High
Alternate Career	Settled into an alternate career; Need for eventual retirement-based planning	High	Medium	High (For Family)	Medium

“Sponsorship deals enabled me to earn some extra money which, in turn, helped me to cater to training expenses that were not getting covered through the grants I received. Hiring a manager to manage my commercial interests turned out to be a very good decision and has been very beneficial for me.

It is not only about the quantity of money that such a professional is able to bring but it is also about having a person in your team who you can trust, who has a good portfolio with lot of experience. He or she can have the option to earn a commission on the profits and that can serve as a good motivation to find sponsors who will support you.”

- Danka Bartekova

SUMMARY SHEET



Rights are your **entitlements**, **obligations** are your duties.



Learn to differentiate the **different kinds of contracts**.



There are remedies and consequences for a **breach of contract**.



You could be a brand; cultivate your **brand value**.



Sponsorship could provide you resources to **boost performance**.



Income in sport could come from a variety of sources.



Financial planning helps you set realistic long term goals.



Know the tools and methods to **manage your earnings**.



Insurance can **protect** you from the risk of financial loss.



Meet a **financial advisor** today.

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SECTION 7: 10 THINGS ABOUT MANAGING ONE'S CAREER

Introduction

The knowledge and skills required to effectively manage your career are diverse and need attention. It is never too early to start thinking about using the media effectively to create awareness about your performances or to start planning for a career beyond sport.

Media can play a very important role in highlighting your achievements and creating your personal brand. Social media platforms offer you the ability to directly control the content generated about you. They allow you to establish a direct connect with your peers and fans around the world.

Transitioning to a life beyond sport is equally important for athletes. It is advisable to consider acquiring educational or vocational skills simultaneously with your shooting career to help smoothen the process of transition when you retire from competitive sport.

You may want to address questions such as, "What are the pros and cons of media visibility?", "What should I be aware of while transitioning careers?" or "Who are the professionals to approach to help with career management?". This section has been designed to throw light on these topics and reading through it will equip you with basic knowledge regarding them.



1. What is the role of the media in professional sport? What are the pros and cons of media visibility?

Any and all communication tools and platforms that are used to give information and data to the public are referred to as media. Sports and media have a mutually beneficial relationship, also called a 'symbiotic' relationship¹. Media coverage helps disseminate information and develop the popular opinion about a sport or a sportsperson and that, in turn, increases the interest that people have in sports news and events. The coverage showcases an athlete's ability and then explains his or her achievements in simple terms that can be understood even by a person who does not follow the sport regularly or is not knowledgeable of its technicalities.

There are primarily three categories of media – print, broadcast and digital. Print media include newspapers, magazines and other publications. It is the oldest type of media and its reach is generally referred to as 'readership'. Broadcast media include television, radio and other audio-visual productions. Its reach is referred to as 'viewership' or 'listenership'. Digital media are the newest form of media and are a collection

of all information sources available online. The information is made available on 'websites' or through apps which provide text, audio, as well as video information. These days, most print and broadcast media have digital versions as well.

Media visibility is the extent to which an individual or an entity is 'visible' or covered in different media. This has both pros and cons for athletes. Media visibility can enable athletes to be known for their achievements, to develop a fan base, generate support for issues that matter to him or her and get access to sponsors. It can contribute to the creation of the personal brand and bring commercial opportunities. However, overexposure in the media can take the focus away from performance and harm career prospects.

While there is no denying the important role that media plays or can play, it is always the on-field performance that drives interest. Moreover, you could approach professional help to manage media visibility after having gained considerable recognition.



2. What are the types and benefits of social media platforms?

Social media is an internet-based communication platform that enables people to create, share and exchange information, ideas and life developments through virtual communities or 'networks'².



Unlike the traditional forms of media, social media offer platforms where the content is generated by the user. In sport, this can enable athletes to have greater control of the information propagated about them and establish a direct connection with peers, friends, fans and the wider world.

While traditional media outlets are still necessary to initially establish one's identity and reputation, social media can help from then on to maintain and grow relationships as well as bring in professional opportunities.

Social media provide you with an outlet to highlight lesser-known aspects of your personality³. You could create a media plan

Various types of social media platforms that are currently popular are:

- **Social networking:** platforms that allow a user to upload and share information with others who are connected to them in the network, e.g., Facebook and LinkedIn.
- **Video-sharing:** platforms that allow a user to upload videos that can be shared with a specific group of people as well as all across the internet, e.g., YouTube and Vimeo.
- **Live-streaming:** platforms that allow a user to broadcast or watch live video from their computers and smartphones, e.g., Periscope and Facebook Live.
- **Microblogging:** platforms that allow a user to share content and information through a small or limited amount of characters, e.g., Twitter and Tumblr.
- **Blogging:** where one can share articles or video content without any specified limit for others to view, comment and share, e.g., WordPress and Blogger.
- **Photo Sharing:** platforms for a user to upload and share images from his/her personal or professional life, e.g., Instagram, Snapchat and Flickr.

regarding the topics you want to post about and the innovative ways that you can use to convey them. Moreover, if you are associated with any cause, it can be communicated for widespread attention. Ideally, a social cause should be something that has affected you or moves you on a personal level and something you can speak about with passion and understanding.

3. What precautions must one take with social media? How can one respond to 'trolling' and criticism on social media?

It is essential to take precautions on social media, especially with updates and mentions. One should be cautious and conscious of every post and ensure that it is appropriate in both content and form. There could be instances when a post is misinterpreted or misunderstood and causes an undesired distraction. Social media is, therefore, best utilized in the context of performance rather than as a pastime.



It is common to find criticism and 'trolling' on social media, especially after a bad performance. It is best to understand the intention behind it before emotionally reacting to what is being said. People might be doing so to vent discontent that they are feeling by projecting their negative baggage on you. You can't control whether you will become a troll's target but can always decide if you want to be a troll's victim.

There might be instances when you are pulled into a controversy or are a subject of a false accusation or rumour. During such instances, use of social media should be done strategically rather than impulsively. In case you feel the urge to clarify, it is advisable to avoid social media altogether and use other traditional methods such as a press conference. In case you do use social media, you should convey your messages in a sincere and timely manner while avoiding apologizing for things that you are not responsible. Advice from your coach, senior athletes or public relations professionals will be useful in this regard. Moreover, it is best to address others involved in the issue privately

and use social media only to interact with well-wishers and supporters.

Here are some of the precautions to take:

- Manage all your online profiles personally and post authentically.
- Select and pursue platforms that provide you with the best chance of connecting with your peers and well-wishers.
- Learn about privacy settings and be aware of all information that the public can view.
- Strictly avoid posts about confidential information like team selection and strategy.
- Be aware of social media usage guidelines during events.
- Switch off notifications in case of distraction or loss of focus.
- Do not be obliged to follow or befriend anyone, retain your choice regarding all matters.
- Respect the rights, interests and preferences of those with whom you are communicating, especially your peers.
- Gain complete knowledge about a topic before posting about it, especially if it is about something outside of sport.
- Understand your responsibility as a role model, avoid posting impulsively.
- Report any misuse, harassment or hacking of your account to authorities concerned.

4. How can one prepare for an interaction with a journalist, a television interview or a press conference?

Media interactions such as interviews provide a chance for the public to know athletes outside of their sporting achievements. The public usually seeks to know about your personal struggles, outlook towards life, value systems and the things that you care about.



Considering that media interactions have the potential to have a positive influence on others, you should make an attempt to engage in an authentic manner and avoid deliberately portraying yourself to be someone you are not.

Whenever you are approached for a media interaction, it is recommended that you check for the type of media involved. If you are not familiar with the name of the publication/TV channel,

then basic research about it by asking friends/seniors or a search on the internet is advisable.

- If it is a print media journalist involved, then you have the freedom to be more casual. You can address the questions elaborately and after careful thought. You could also review the answers at the end of the interview and request a change in any of them.
- In the case of a television interview or a show, you would have to make more effort to prepare and get things right the first time. Considering the audience both see and hear you, you need to pay attention to all the factors that contribute to your appearance like your body language, dress, and gestures. It is best to turn up in whatever may be your casual work 'uniform' of the moment. Being interviewed as an athlete is part of your working day.
- Press conferences are generally organised for the purposes of distributing information to the media regarding a specific incident, event or competition. Here, you should be attentive, specific and respectful to all while answering the queries.

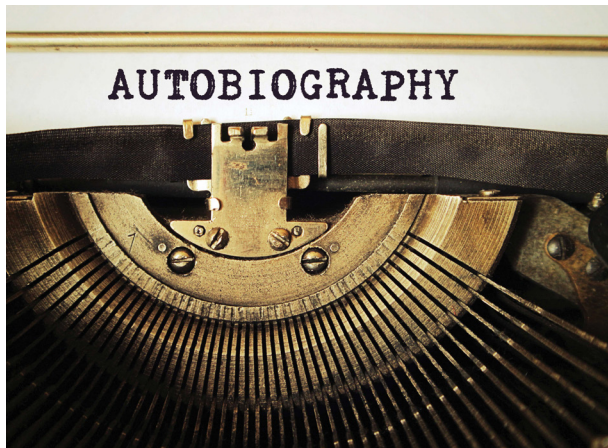
It is not necessary to speak English or any other specific language anywhere in the world if you are not comfortable with the language. You could request a team member or official to act as an interpreter and translate the questions and your answers. A short while before the interaction is to begin, you could think about the difficult or 'trick' questions that could be asked and the answers you would like to give to them – it could pertain to injury, qualification or coaching. This way, you will not be surprised or thrown off when the question arises and will be able to provide a cogent and thoughtful narrative.

HANDLING INTERVIEWS – GOOD PRACTICES:

Before Interaction	During Interaction	After Interaction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check which media organization the journalist is representing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be friendly, respectful and relaxed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In case you enjoy the interaction, thank the journalist for taking an interest.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do basic research on the previous work and reputation of the journalist as well as of the organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that you are appropriately dressed, especially if it is a TV interview. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request the journalist and others present for constructive feedback (only after you are comfortable with the journalist).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find out what kind of report/show the journalist intends to produce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to each question carefully and think before answering them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In case you are misquoted or misinterpreted, check to see if it is worth reacting to.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the prospect with your coach, a senior or team manager before confirming the interview. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid being defensive or aggressive in case of a critical or uncomfortable question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If it is, always respond through official procedures (like filing an online complaint).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anticipate the possible questions and prepare the key messages to convey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answer questions accurately based on facts or personal interpretation rather than on opinions borrowed from others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appreciate the journalist if you are impressed by the outcome.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make a list of things to avoid talking about. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use examples from your own career to convey a point. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make use of the coverage to build your brand value.

5. How can biographies or autobiographies help to leave a legacy beyond one's career?

When one is constantly written about by others on media platforms, it is only natural to feel a need to be represented without bias, prejudice or any preconceived notions. Several athletes take the initiative to tell their own stories, through the publication of biographies and autobiographies.



A biography is a non-fiction account that provides a description of the subject's life story based on various experiences. When such an account is written by the subject himself or herself, it is known as an autobiography. A biography provides an opportunity to be written about by a professional writer who can maintain an objective tone and present the facts through various perspectives. On the other hand, an autobiography is more personal, offers more control to the subject, can have authentic descriptions of the emotions felt and connects more intimately with a reader.

To take up such a project, here are a few options that you can explore⁴:

- Approaching trusted members or friends from the journalist community.
- Taking up blogging or freelancing assignments to gauge potential audience interest in your skills.

- Approaching traditional book publishers by yourself, or through literary agents.
- Self-Publishing using the help of freelance editors, designers and digital marketing companies who specialize in e-books.

Endeavouring to develop such personal accounts can serve many purposes:

- **Clarify the truth:** They offer you a chance to present a personal version of your life story and provide an authentic interpretation of facts and life events to the readers.
- **Self-awareness:** You get to reflect on your past and reconsider the circumstances in your life. It will enable you to make sense of past feelings, the perceived obstacles and build on the defining moments of your career.
- **Future-planning:** You will re-connect with your aspirations, strengths and networks and this can enable you to plan your future better.
- **Inspiration:** Your story could offer insights and inspire the future generation. It might help young athletes to improve their decision making and be better prepared to face or accept life situations.
- **Income Generation:** A book publication deal brings with it, the possibility of earning revenue. Since several books involving athletes have become best-sellers, the financial gain from such a prospect is worth a consideration.



Media is an integral part of the modern day sport. Through various platforms, they create awareness of the sport and the athletes among the public. Media interactions such as interviews provide a chance for the public to know you outside of your sporting achievements and be inspired by your struggles.



Sports careers are short-lived and it's inevitable that an athlete has to transition to an alternate career after retiring from the sport. Various skills and traits that make one successful in sport can help one to succeed in the work place too. It requires a lot of planning, just like sports performance, and one's prospects depend on the amount of time invested.

6. What role can education and additional non-sport skills play?

The importance of education and life-skills to athletes is being impressed upon at various forums internationally. Pursuing them not only facilitates a smooth transition to alternate careers but also improves motivation and performance during the career. Various programmes like the Athlete Career Programme by the IOC have been launched to enable athletes to make informed choices in this regard.

Education brings many advantages. It can improve creative thinking abilities and offer opportunities for meaningful pursuits outside of sport. Being able to do so depends on choosing the appropriate subjects to study and building relationships with the right educational institutions. This, in turn, depends on key skills like time management, overcoming procrastination and active studying skills⁵. There are specific methods to hone such skills and it is

in your best interest to devote time towards this. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) defines life skills as “abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with demands and challenges of everyday life”⁶. Through a sports career, an athlete gets a chance to develop many life skills by virtue of training and participating in competition. Making an effort to recognize and further develop them, either through observation or dissemination by others, can lead to overall improvement in the quality of life and well-being.

They can also help you improve your problem-solving skills, decision making abilities, goal setting strategies and enhance your capacity to be a role model. You could keep a lookout for online tools, workshops and initiatives developed by sports organizations and make appropriate choices to pursue them.

Education and life skills programmes are best pursued while you are young and active in sport. They can prepare you for career transition when you retire and help you develop a broader outlook.



7. What are the things to be aware of regarding transitioning to alternate careers?

Sports careers are short-lived and it's inevitable that an athlete has to transition to another career after retiring from the sport. At times, an athlete might have to pursue an alternate career while being active in the sport. It is to be noted that various skills and traits that make one successful in sport can help one to succeed in the workplace too. Career transition not only depends on internal factors like motivation but also on external factors like the economy and political situation. It requires a lot of planning, just like sports performance, and one's prospects depend on the amount of time invested.



Career transition involves three phases⁷:

- The first phase involves evaluating one's passions, motivation, skills and interests. Based on the results of the evaluation and your educational level, you can investigate about the opportunities available in the job market that best suit you. Such opportunities could involve full-time jobs, part-time jobs, internships, apprenticeship or shadowing.

For assistance in this regard, you can take online career suitability tests, approach career counsellors, senior athletes, the respective NOC, Universities and even write to the Athlete Career Programme at athletes@adecco.com

- The second phase involves setting alternate career goals, building professional networks and learning to articulate sport-specific skills in different contexts. Building networks can be done by identifying the relevant people from various fields that you have met during your career and establishing contact with them. These networks can help you gather crucial information about job opportunities and secure key introductions⁸. You could then explore the utility of skills learnt through sport (like time management, leadership, handling pressure, etc.) in various industries. Career coaches, agents and industry leaders can be approached for assistance during this phase.
- The third phase involves creating a professional Curriculum Vitae (CV), preparing for job interviews and applying for relevant job opportunities. Several training techniques could be useful in this regard, e.g., if you have practiced imagery before a competition, you could use it to prepare for interviews as well. There are worksheets and modules available online that simulate the interview environment to help you prepare effectively. Seeking regular feedback regarding your CV, interview skills and jobs applied can help you make suitable adaptations and increase the chances of securing the ideal opportunity.

It is best to consider, plan and prepare for career transition while being active in the sport itself. It will enable you to make the best use of resources available and successfully meet personal needs.

8. What are the roles of and opportunities provided by the ISSF Athletes Committee?

The ISSF Athletes Committee has been established with the objective of building a bridge between the athlete and the ISSF. The committee gathers information and opinions from athletes on their needs and serves as a direct link with the ISSF to address them⁹.

The Athletes Committee consists of a Chairman and six members who are all former athletes. If you are interested in being part of the committee, your nomination needs to be put forward by your National Federation through nomination forms available with the ISSF. Elections are held once in 4 years during the ISSF World Championships. Voting generally happens at designated Election Booths present at the venue. It involves a process where each participating athlete gets a chance to select 4 members among those nominated.

Out of the 7 members, 4 of them are elected through this process. The remaining 3 members are appointed by the ISSF Executive Committee in order to guarantee a balance between gender, continents and disciplines. The Chairman of the committee is also selected by the Executive Committee.

The first ISSF Athletes Committee came into existence after elections were held in 2006 with Juha Hirvi from Finland being selected as the Chairman. The committee offers a good opportunity to be an ambassador for the sport and engage in its future development. The members involved not only ensure that the voices of the athletes are considered in decision making but also represent the sport in various international forums.

In case you want to put forward your views regarding any aspect of the sport, you can approach any member of the Athletes Committee present at an ISSF supervised competition. Moreover, you can also communicate with them by email through athletes@issf-sports.org

You can find more information about the Athletes Committee at www.issf-sports.org/theissf/organisation/committees/issf_athletes_committee.ashx

The various roles performed by the ISSF Athletes Committee are:

- Making efforts to improve the communication channels among athletes in order to monitor and support their wellbeing.
- Regularly collecting comments, opinions and proposals from athletes.
- Making recommendations to the ISSF Administrative Council based on the views of athletes.
- Striving to provide good conditions for training, accommodation and living for all athletes during training and competition.
- Supporting the fight against the usage of performance-enhancing substances or doping.
- Being physically present at ISSF supervised events to meet various athletes and protect their interests.



9. What are the roles of and opportunities provided by the ISSF Academy?

The ISSF Academy is the official training and development arm of the ISSF¹⁰. It was established in 1992 with the specific purpose of developing and delivering coach education courses for Olympic shooting sports. The Academy offers a comprehensive range of courses that enable a coach to graduate from the club level to the Olympic level. On the completion of these courses, the coaches are awarded various licenses. Considering that the IOC recognizes the ISSF as the international federation for shooting - having the ISSF coaching license is a clear mark of competency at the international level.



ISSF Coach Logos

The course structures at the ISSF Academy are designed to give a detailed understanding of the pertinent concepts of shooting and are based on an athlete-centric methodology. Each of the courses builds upon a previous course and are constantly revised. The ISSF Academy's coach's license guarantees that a coach has been through an extensive set of coursework and has cleared all the required examinations. The licenses issued are valid for a period of 4 years after which, they must be renewed. While the D-Course could be translated by host federations

or conducted with the assistance of local translators, A, B and C courses are all conducted in English at present.

Besides these courses, the ISSF Academy conducts a week-long course for National Federations and their senior coaching and administrative staff. The IOC/ISSF National Training Systems Development Course is aimed at helping them develop and implement a national coaching structure for Olympic shooting sports. This is free of cost and has no entry requirement except a recommendation by the federation. In this way, the ISSF Academy engages itself in offering a wide range of services for the development of the sport. Athletes interested in contributing either through coaching or in an administrative capacity can access opportunities at the ISSF Academy.

To know more about the opportunities available through the ISSF Academy, visit the page on the ISSF website : www.issf-sports.org/theissf/academy.ashx

The graduated system of learning involves a coach progressing from D-license to C-license, through to B and ultimately on to an A-license. The D-course is conducted upon the request of a national federation, the C-Course every year, the B-Course every two years and the A-course is conducted whenever there is sufficient demand from qualified license holders.

You can find more information about the courses offered at the ISSF Academy in the end of this section.

10. Who are the professionals to approach to help with career management?

Journalists: The first professionals from the media that you usually encounter are the journalists. Building and maintaining good relationships with a few journalists whom you trust can bring long-term benefits. You could approach them if you want to discuss and highlight specific issues related to your career. They would also be able to advise on ideal pathways to approach publishers.

Media trainers can coach and train to impart language and communication skills that are required to handle and harness media opportunities.

Agents might be helpful once you have attained a certain level of recognition. A knowledgeable agent can be a source of valuable career advice and guidance.

Good agents will:

- Value the perception that the public already has of you and help build your brand appropriately.
- Support you in crisis situations and control what is being said on media.
- Educate you about effective strategies for dealing with the media.
- Assist in building and executing an effective social media strategy.
- Never get in the way of your on-field preparation or duties by offering extra publicity or money as an excuse.

Literary agents will be able to represent you and connect your work with appropriate publishers in case you want to publish your story. They can guide you through negotiating contracts, royalty payments and bring public recognition to your work.

The **National Sports Federation** would be able to guide you to access opportunities provided by the ISSF and the IOC. Besides, several email contacts are available at the ISSF website for athletes to directly seek information regarding specific initiatives and programmes:

ISSF Athletes Committee:
athletes@issf-sports.org

ISSF Academy:
academy@issf-sports.org



“I am a strong education advocate. I started learning Ukrainian and very soon, after the beginning of my University lectures, I felt very fulfilled, knowing I am working on my education aspect, and also doing something that is not connected to shooting. I need to stress on two things. Firstly, everyone deserves an opportunity to get the education they want. Just because you are an athlete, maybe a successful one, doesn’t mean you don’t need education. Secondly, never let your life spin around only shooting sport. Pursue your dreams but do not neglect the educational aspect of your life.”

– Zorana Arunovic

COURSES AND OPPORTUNITIES AT THE ISSF ACADEMY

The ISSF Academy involves a graduated system of learning involving 4 courses¹⁰:

D-Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ It is the first and most basic course offered at the Academy.▪ It is conducted on request by a national federation. The coursework is designed in modular form and delivered over a focused 3-day period.▪ The course can be translated by the host federation or conducted with the assistance of a local translator.▪ Entrance to the course is by recommendation and approval of the host National Federation. The Course fees are also set by the federation.▪ On achieving a 50% score in the examination, one gets the chance to apply for a D-license.
C-Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ It is the first step to an internationally recognised coaching license.▪ It is conducted every year over a 6-day period in a residential setting at an ISSF Accredited Training Centre.▪ The coursework is conducted in English and aims to provide a wide understanding of skills and knowledge required at the National and International level.▪ Entrance to the course is by recommendation and approval of the respective National Federation. The Course fees are €1,250.▪ On achieving a 50% score in the formal examination process, one gets the chance to apply for a C-license.
B-Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ It is designed to provide a greater understanding of the sport as desired at the level of International World Cup circuit.▪ It is conducted once every 2 years over a 6-day period in a residential setting at an ISSF Accredited Training Centre.▪ The coursework is conducted in English and has a specific emphasis on Sports Science.▪ Entrance to the course is restricted to valid C-license holders upon the recommendation and approval of the respective National Federation. The Course fees are €1,250.▪ On achieving a 50% score in the formal examination process, one gets the chance to apply for a B-license. A 75% score makes one eligible for applying for an A-Course.

A-Course

- It is the highest-level course offered by the ISSF Academy. It reflects top professional skills and the greatest commitment to the sport.
- It is conducted whenever there is a sufficient demand from the B-license holders. It takes place over a 6-day period in a residential setting at an ISSF Accredited Training Centre.
- The coursework is conducted in English and specifically focuses on competition planning and tactical situations.
- Entrance to the course is restricted to valid B-license holders with a minimum 75% score and upon the recommendation and approval of the respective National Federation. The Course fees are €1,250.
- A period of one-year of pre-course work including course material study, research project, training diary and conduct of a D-Course is required in advance of the course.
- The assessment is through a presentation given on tactical training plans and crisis management. A passing score makes one eligible for the A-license.

The ISSF Academy Coach Licences are not directly issued at the end of the course. Successful candidates are provided with an application form so that they can apply directly to ISSF Headquarters with the enclosed licence fee of € 50. The licences are valid for a period of four years after which they must be renewed or upgraded.

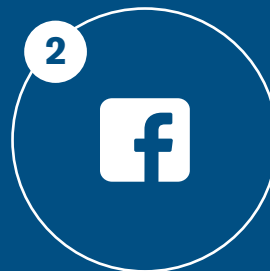


Participants from the ISSF Academy C-Course conducted in 2018 at Finland

SUMMARY SHEET



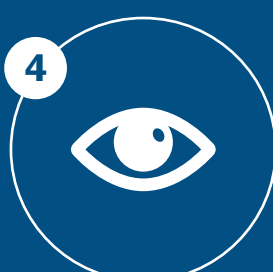
Know your media categories – **print, broadcast and digital.**



Social media helps to connect, inspire and grow.



Watch what you post on social media, **you inspire many.**



Visualize the media interaction before it actually takes place.



Thought about **publishing your story** yet?



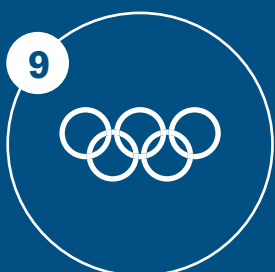
Education is best pursued when you are active in sport.



Career transition needs as much planning as sport performance.



ISSF Athletes Committee is a bridge between athletes and the ISSF.



ISSF Academy can help you become a coach at the **Olympic level.**



Media trainers can help you **handle interviews** with ease.

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SECTION 8: 10 THINGS ABOUT PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY

Introduction

Sport creates a common platform for people from across the world to come together to pursue a common goal. It helps to break barriers and brings joy, both to players and enthusiasts. As an athlete, you are expected to embody ideals such as fair play, good sportsmanship, honesty and competitive spirit.

To do so, you will need to train and participate in environments that are fair, equitable, free and respectful. However, certain conditions might make you feel vulnerable and pressured to engage in behavior that does not embody these ideals. In such cases, the choice to prevent misconduct and uphold the interests of sport is yours to make.

As you ponder these things, you may have a number of questions like, “What constitutes competition manipulation and how can I avoid it?”, “What precautions can I take to protect myself against innocent doping violations?”, “What is the procedure to report instances of harassment?” and “Who are the professionals to approach regarding sports integrity issues?”.

This section of the handbook firstly explains situations that compromise the integrity of sport and secondly, offers advice on what you could do to avoid or to respond appropriately to such situations.



1. What are the underlying values of sport and what is the meaning of integrity?

Good sportsmanship, providing a fair, inclusive and safe environment, honesty, respect, fair play and uncertainty of outcomes are some of the core values of sport. These values place the interests of the wide variety of stakeholders ahead of an individual's desire for a favourable outcome. While a positive result can have short-term benefits, it is the values exemplified by the participating athletes that have a long term impact not just on the sport but also on societal responses.

Integrity is the choice to hold oneself accountable to one's values and standards at all times, even when it may not help in achieving the desired result. It is an enduring personal value that helps you focus on why you play sport and how you conduct yourself.

Manipulating results, using performance-enhancing drugs, misrepresenting one's age, creating a hostile environment, etc., to gain an unfair advantage, are examples of behaviours which undermine the integrity of the sport. Such practices result from participants either not recognising the values of sport, not seeking help to address issues or not being able to place the interests of sport above their own personal interests. On the other hand, competing through honest means in a way that upholds the core values can inspire others and strengthen the legacy of both the athlete and the sport.



2. What is doping and what are performance enhancing drugs?

Doping refers to the use of prohibited substances or methods to improve sporting performance¹. The offence of doping is defined as the occurrence of one or more anti-doping rule violations set forth in Articles 2.1 to 2.10 of the World Anti-Doping Code².

Performance-enhancing substances are those that can be used to artificially improve sports performance. They are usually in the form of stimulants, hormones, anabolic steroids or diuretics. These substances typically improve concentration, enhance muscle strength, aid in training for longer periods of time, help in recovering faster from sporting injuries or are used to mask the use of other prohibited substances.

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), established in 1999, is the independent agency that deals with all issues concerning doping in

sport. It is involved with scientific research and education regarding the topic and has created the World Anti-Doping Code (“the Code”). The Code is a core document that contains the rules, details, policies and regulations about doping⁴. The ISSF is a Signatory to the Code and follows the Code’s mandate in all areas of its antidoping program⁵.

A substance or method is usually banned when it meets at least two of the following three criteria³:

- Enhances sports performance;
- Poses a threat to an athlete’s health;
- Violates the spirit of sport.



3. What are anti-doping rule violations? What are the testing procedures that one must be aware of?

An anti-doping rule violation (ADRV) could refer to one or many of the following instances²:

- Presence of a prohibited substance or its metabolites or markers in an athlete's sample.
- Use or attempted use of a prohibited substance or method.
- Evading, refusing or failing to submit a sample, after being notified.
- Failing to file required whereabouts information or missing three consecutive tests.
- Intentionally tampering or attempting to sabotage the doping control process.
- Possession of a prohibited substance or method.
- Trafficking or attempted trafficking of a prohibited substance or method.
- Administration or attempting to administer a prohibited substance or method to an athlete.
- An association with any person (fellow athlete, coach, doctor or physio) proven guilty of being involved in an offence related to doping.
- Intentionally assisting, encouraging, aiding, abetting, conspiring or covering up in any case related to doping.

All athletes who compete in ISSF events and who hold an ISSF ID are equally subject to both In-Competition and Out-of-Competition testing⁵. In-Competition testing in shooting sport refers to the sample collection process

that can take place in an ISSF Championship during the period between twelve hours before a competition in which the athlete is scheduled to participate and the end of such competition. Out-of-Competition testing can occur at any time of the year (excluding the In-Competition event testing periods) and at any location, such as an athlete's home, place of training, or even while they are abroad for personal or training reasons. No advance notice is given to the athlete during such a process.

The World Anti-Doping Code (Code) works in conjunction with six International Standards aimed at bringing harmonization among anti-doping organizations in various technical areas. WADA has also created the International Standard for Testing and Investigations (ISTI) to plan for effective testing and to maintain the integrity and identity of samples, from notifying the athlete to transporting samples for analysis. All doping control processes are outlined in the ISTI and must be respected. The ISTI and all International Standards is further explained at www.wada-ama.org/en/international-standards

The term Registered Testing Pool (RTP) refers to the pool of top-level athletes who are subject to testing as part of the ISSF or a National Anti-Doping Organization's test distribution plan⁵. The pool is created by the ISSF and/or the relevant National Anti-Doping Organization. RTP athletes must provide their whereabouts including a 60-minute time slot for which they can be available for testing every day of the year. These whereabouts must be submitted via ADAMS (WADA's online anti-doping management system). Failure to submit timely and accurate whereabouts information via ADAMS or to be present at the location and time indicated on three occasions in twelve months could result in an anti-doping rule violation. The RTP pool is typically updated at each quarter and athletes are typically informed of their inclusion or removal from an RTP. You can find more information at www.issf-sports.org/theissf/antidoping.ashx

4. What precautions can one take to avoid unintentional doping violations? What are the consequences of an asserted anti-doping rule violation?

Athletes need to be aware of and regularly refer to the code for Prohibited List of substances & methods, which is updated and published on 1st January each year. The Prohibited List is an extensive document that outlines the various performance-enhancing substances and methods that are prohibited in-competition, out-of-competition, and in particular sports². The ISSF follows the Prohibited List as a signatory to the Code and as condition of participation, all shooting sport athletes are also bound by it.

As a precaution before using or ingesting any substance, you should be sure that its ingredients are not prohibited, whether they are in the form of foods, supplements, medicines, creams, drops or sprays. All athletes are cautioned about buying anything over the Internet or when travelling overseas. In case you have consciously exercised caution, proof of the same (email or written copies of letters or documents written to seek clarification or advice) can be useful. Also, as noted earlier in this handbook, because it is possible that some supplements can become contaminated during the manufacturing process, it is best to avoid their use altogether. Ultimately, you alone are responsible for what you use or ingest.

The term Adverse Analytical Finding (AAF) refers to reported findings of a WADA accredited laboratory that indicates a sample collected from an athlete (during in-competition or out-of-competition testing) yielded a positive doping result. An AAF only becomes an asserted anti-

doping rule violation (ADRV) after the completion of a preliminary review and a formal enquiry. Further, a hearing takes place after which a written and reasoned decision is provided by the ISSF Anti-Doping Hearing Panel as to whether an ADRV has truly occurred and what the appropriate sanction should be, based on the factual circumstances of each case.

Apart from the sanctions that could range from disqualification from an event, a warning, a four-year ban or a life ban from the sport, doping has certain health and financial consequences. Doping can result in increased aggression and mood swings, increase the risk of contracting hepatitis and HIV (from needle use), impotence, libido disorders, infertility, premature baldness, hypertension and cardiac deficiency⁶. It can also lead to loss of sponsorship deals, loss of prize money and loss of funding. Moreover, a life ban will cause a loss of livelihood and you could end up in debt as legal fees and ongoing costs will still need to be paid.

WADA publishes a Prohibited Association List which includes the name, nationality and end date of the disqualifying status of Athlete Support Personnel who have committed anti-doping rule violations⁵. Associating with anyone named on this list could also result in an ADRV. So, one needs to be aware of Prohibited Association list and the names listed therein in order to avoid the consequences of an anti-doping rule violation. It can be downloaded from the ISSF website at www.issf-sports.org/theissf/antidoping.ashx



5. Therapeutic Use Exemptions. What are they and what does one need to do to apply?

A Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) is a mean by which one can obtain prior approval to use a substance or method that is otherwise prohibited for the treatment of a legitimate medical condition⁷. A TUE provides an official authorization to follow the required treatment.

The granting and denial of TUE's is governed by World Anti-Doping Code's International Standard for Therapeutic Use Exemptions which can be downloaded from the WADA website.

At the international-level, the ISSF has its own TUE Committee that reviews all submitted TUE applications and grants or denies them⁵. International-level athletes must submit their TUE application to the ISSF along with all relevant medical information in support, at least 30 days before the start of a Competition in which they wish to compete. If the ISSF grants a TUE, it shall notify the athlete and his or her National Federation as well as his or her Anti-Doping Organization via ADAMS. The ISSF TUE Application template is available for download on the ISSF website.

Any national-level athlete holding a national-level TUE, further to applying for and being granted one from his or her National Anti-Doping Organisation, must inform ISSF of the TUE and request ISSF to recognize the TUE prior to competing in any international competition. Unless recognized by the ISSF, a national-level TUE will be considered invalid at the international level.

You must be aware that the TUE issued: (a) shall expire automatically at the end of any term for which it was granted; (b) may be cancelled if you do not promptly comply with any requirements or conditions mentioned in the International Standard for Therapeutic Use Exemptions; (c) may be withdrawn if it is later determined that the criteria were not in fact met; or (d) may be reversed on review by WADA or CAS.

The criteria for granting a TUE are⁵:

- The prohibited substance or method in question is needed to treat an acute or chronic medical condition and the athlete would experience a significant impairment to health if treatment is withheld.
- The therapeutic use is highly unlikely to produce any additional enhancement of performance beyond a return to the normal state of health.
- There is no reasonable alternative available.
- The necessity to use is not a consequence, wholly or in part, of the prior use (without a TUE) of a substance or method which was prohibited at the time of such use.

In fact, WADA has the capacity to review all TUE decisions at any time, either on request by those affected or on its own initiative. If the National Anti-Doping Organization considers that the TUE granted by ISSF does not meet the criteria set out in the International Standard for Therapeutic Use Exemptions, it has 21 days to refer the matter to WADA for review⁸. Moreover, WADA can also review a decision by the ISSF to reject a TUE granted by the National Anti-Doping Organization if the organization or the athlete requests for it. Finally, any decision by WADA regarding TUEs may be appealed by the athlete, the National Anti-Doping Organization and/or the ISSF at the Court of Arbitration of Sport (CAS).

More information related to Therapeutic Use Exemptions is available in Section 5 (Subsection 4.4) of the ISSF Rulebook:
www.issf-sports.org/theissf/rules.ashx

THE WORLD ANTI-DOPING CODE
**INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD**



PROHIBITED LIST

JANUARY 2018



The Prohibited List is an extensive document published by the World Anti-Doping Agency on 1st January each year. It enlists the various performance-enhancing substances and methods that are prohibited in-competition, out-of-competition, and in particular sports. The ISSF follows the Prohibited List as a signatory to the WADA Code. You can access it at the WADA website:

https://www.wada-ama.org/sites/default/files/prohibited_list_2018_en.pdf



An environment that is respectful, equitable and free from all forms of non-accidental violence and discrimination is necessary to exercise the right to engage in 'safe sport'. Develop your ability to recognize discriminatory behaviour and create a trusted support group.

6. What is meant by competition manipulation and how can one take precautions against it?

Competition manipulation refers to any intentional alteration of the course or outcome of a sports competition to obtain an undue benefit for oneself or for others⁹. Such acts are an insult to fair sport and remove all or part of the unpredictable nature of the competition. It involves several methods to manipulate the outcome of a competition including match-fixing, bribery, revealing of inside information, range manipulation, etc.

- Fixing involves the manipulation of an individual event or series of events within a competition in order to ensure that the outcomes or events that someone has bet on, actually occur.
- Bribery is any act of offering, promising, giving or accepting money or other benefits for deliberately altering performance or official activities.
- Revealing inside information refers to intentional disclosure of confidential information related to a competition for the purposes of betting or any other form of manipulation.
- Range manipulation in shooting events involves the deliberate and illegal manipulation of equipment, equipment testing, ammunition testing, scoring decisions, competition results and providing unauthorized access to systems or competition data¹⁰.
- Fraudulent betting refers to the act of placing bets on a competition that one is participating in or is a part of, with the intention of receiving money or other benefits through it.

These prohibited activities are not restricted to professional or high-profile competitions like

the World Cup or Olympics. These may occur at all levels of competition, whether at the regional, national or international level. If you are approached, requested or hired by any third party to manipulate the results of a particular competition, it is vital that you report such activity as soon as practicable. The reporting mechanisms are described later at page 147.

You must immediately report:

- If you are approached by a third party to share confidential information regarding the event, range or team.
- If you are approached by someone trying to manipulate results, whether or not you are offered an incentive to help that individual.
- If you know or reasonably suspect someone else is trying to manipulate results, or that they have been approached to manipulate results.
- If you have received any actual or implied threats of any nature.

This may be particularly hard if your peers are involved, if the rewards are high or the individual who has approached you is a close friend in a position of trust. However, it is best to avoid temptation, to set your fears aside and to be courageous. If you fail or refuse to report such activity and it comes to light at a later time, you face an investigation and a severe sanction, irrespective of the outcome of the bet or competition.

More information related to competition manipulation is available in Section 5 (Article 3.12.3.5) of the ISSF Rulebook:
www.issf-sports.org/theissf/rules.ashx

7. What constitutes “harassment and abuse” and how can one take precautions against it?

An environment that is respectful, equitable and free from all forms of non-accidental violence is necessary for athletes to exercise their right to engage in ‘safe sport’¹¹. Instances of harassment and abuse can pose a threat to safe sport as they have a detrimental effect on the well-being of athletes. Considering the importance of addressing the issue, the International Olympic Committee has published a Consensus Statement in 2016. The facts and knowledge gained through such initiatives can serve as a defence and assist in taking necessary precautions.

Harassment and Abuse are categorized into four types³:

- **Psychological Abuse:** involves deliberate, prolonged, demeaning, non-contact behaviour by a person of authority on an individual of a lower status. This could involve belittling, humiliating, scapegoating, rejecting or isolating the victim.
- **Physical Abuse:** involves subjecting an individual to deliberate violence with an intention to cause physical injury or harm. This could involve non-accidental trauma, physical injury, enforcing inappropriate training loads, direct physical abuse, use of dangerous training methods, forced alcohol abuse, systematic doping practices and the creation of unsafe training environments. It can be inflicted by another individual or a group.
- **Neglect:** involves the failure to meet an individual's physical and emotional needs when the means, knowledge and access to service to do so, exist. It can also involve deliberate negligence like the denial of timely medical care or the failure to implement safety mechanisms, that results in preventable illness or injury.
- **Sexual Harassment and Abuse:** involves unwanted or unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature¹². It may or may not involve physical contact, may be verbal or non-verbal, and may be active or passive. Moreover, it may involve a situation where consent either is coerced, manipulated or cannot be given at all. It is usually preceded by the process of grooming where the victim is systematically prepared and desensitized through a relationship of false trust and fear that creates an obligation to submit.

Such behaviour usually results from power imbalances in the sporting environment – it could be an actual hierarchy or a perceived hierarchy. These imbalances often lead to discriminatory behaviour where perpetrators use inter-personal mechanisms that are either physical, verbal or cyber-based. It could occur in any institution or any sport and could be due to sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, race, athlete ability, ethnicity, faith or financial status. While all athletes are susceptible to these problems, it is noted that elite, disabled, child and lesbian/gay/bisexual/trans-sexual (LGBT) athletes are at highest risk.

Some of the precautions that you can take include:

- Making an attempt to understand your roles and rights with regard to the prevention of harassment and abuse.
- Creating a trusted support group involving members that are outside of your entourage, like peers, friends and family.
- Developing your ability to recognize discriminatory behaviour.
- Reporting abuse when you witness it or as you experience it (the procedures related to this have been explained on page 147).
- Utilizing the protection mechanisms, safeguarding policies, and clear pathways the ISSF has established for reporting instances of harassment or abuse whether in training or competition.
- Seeking ways to put forward your voice and concerns regarding safeguarding in sport organizations.
- Conducting due diligence regarding coaches, athletes, environments and athlete protection mechanisms before training or participation.



8. How can one report instances of competition manipulation, harassment and other ethical breaches?

As per the IOC Code of Ethics, all sports organizations like the International Olympic Committee, International Federations, National Olympic Committees, National Federations and other IOC recognised organisations have an obligation to ensure the safeguarding of athletes and address the complaints. The mechanism to address these stakeholders depends on the time of occurrence and the individuals involved.

- For any complaints, charges or guidance during ISSF supervised competitions or involving officials affiliated to the ISSF, you can approach the Technical Delegate(s) present at the event. You can also address them to the ISSF Secretary General in writing or send an email about the incident to ethics@issf-sports.org. An Ethics Committee will be summoned at that juncture to decide whether to conduct an inquiry. The procedures of the Ethics Committee are based on the ISSF Code of Ethics, which is explained in a table at the end of the section. All such processes are kept in strict confidentiality.
- You can also approach the ISSF Athletes Committee to convey any specific concerns. You can either communicate directly with any member present at the competitions or send an email to athletes@issf-sports.org
- For complaints during IOC supervised events like the Olympic Games and the Youth Olympic Games or involving officials affiliated with the IOC, you can make use of the IOC Integrity and Compliance Hotline available at <https://secure.registration.olympic.org/en/issue-reporter>.

For complaints that are specific to harassment and abuse during the Olympic Games, you can approach the designated IOC Safeguarding Officer, who will be present at the Olympic Village throughout the Games Time Period. You can also approach members of The IOC Athletes' Commission or The IOC Medical and Scientific Commission.

All complaints made to individuals or bodies affiliated to the IOC are analysed by the Ethics and Compliance Office and referred to the IOC Ethics Commission wherever applicable¹³. The procedures are based on the IOC Code of Ethics which can be referred to in the Olympics website.

- Both the ISSF Ethics Committee and the IOC Ethics Commission provide for ways to appeal their decisions and sanctions.
- For any complaints during national level competitions or involving officials affiliated to the national sports organizations, you must seek and follow the procedures laid out by the respective organization. It must be noted that in case the organization has no policy in place or does not have the means to deal with the complaint effectively, you can still approach the ISSF or the IOC, who may take up the matter after analyzing it.
- In case you are not satisfied with the administrative remedies, you have the option to seek legal remedy by approaching public authorities like law enforcement agencies and sport betting entities. The law applicable will be dependent on the place where the crime has occurred and the nature of the complaint involved.

9. What are the roles and functions of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS)?

The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) is an independent international quasi-judicial institution established in 1984 for the settlement of sports-related disputes. The Code of Sports related Arbitration established in 1994 (and revised in 2007 and 2010) governs the organizational and arbitration procedures of CAS¹⁴.

If an individual is not satisfied by a decision or sanction by a sports organization like the IOC or ISSF and has exhausted all possible internal remedies, he or she can appeal at CAS. The arbitral awards pronounced by CAS have the same enforceability as judgements of ordinary courts. The decisions of CAS are final and binding in most cases and can be appealed at the Swiss Federal Tribunal only under special circumstances.

CAS is made up of the Ordinary Arbitration Division and an Appeals Arbitration Division (in case of appeals contesting any decision). For further information please visit the CAS website:

<http://www.tas-cas.org/en/index.html>

The Code of Sports-related Arbitration contains the all statutes related to the functioning of ICAS and CAS as well as the details of various procedures involved. You can refer to the Code in the CAS website: <http://www.tas-cas.org/en/icas/code-statutes-of-icas-and-cas.html>

10. Who are the professionals to approach regarding sports integrity issues?

If you require awareness of what constitutes doping and what precautions you must take, you can either approach the ISSF Medical Committee or TUE committee. You may also approach qualified sports nutritionists and experts in sports medicine regularly to get informed advice.

For issues relating to harassment or manipulation, you must go forward with your complaint as per the procedures outlined in page 147.

Furthermore, in serious cases related to harassment and abuse, you can approach the respective law enforcement authorities and file a criminal complaint.

The IOC has created an integrity and compliance hotline in the form of an online platform in case you wish to directly report issues regarding competition manipulation, integrity non-compliance and harassment or abuse. It can be accessed at <https://secure.registration.olympic.org/en/issue-reporter/index>

Coaches and event managers remain persons of authority who may be contacted with any other concerns related to the team environment or your professional journey.

ISSF CODE OF ETHICS: USEFUL INFORMATION

The following provides some useful information regarding the content of the ISSF Code of Ethics.

The Code of Ethics is applicable to all athletes, coaches, officials and employees of the ISSF, ISSF member federations, Continental Shooting Sport Confederations and other participants in ISSF activities and events.

For further information, please refer to the official ISSF Rulebook including the ISSF Code of Ethics on the website under: www.issf-sports.org/theissf/rules.ashx

Offence	Description
Conflict of Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private or personal interests that detract from the ability to perform duties with integrity and in an independent manner. (Private or personal interests include gaining any possible advantage for family members, relatives, friends and acquaintances.)
Offering and Accepting Gifts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offering and accepting gifts to create an undue advantage or conflict of interest and which are given to influence a decision or voting behaviour.
Bribery and Corruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The offering, promising, giving or accepting any undue advantage for the execution or omission of an act related to official activities, whether carried out directly or indirectly or in conjunction with other third parties.
Discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offending the dignity or integrity of a country, person or group of people through contemptuous, discriminatory or denigrating words or actions on account of race, skin color, ethnic, national or social origin, gender, language, religion, political opinion or any other opinion, wealth, birth or any other status, sexual orientation or for any other reason.
Manipulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Betting in relation to a competition one is directly participating in or in relation to any event of a multi-sport competition. The intentional arrangement, act or omission aimed at the improper alteration of the result or course of a competition in order to remove the unpredictability associated with it for personal benefit.

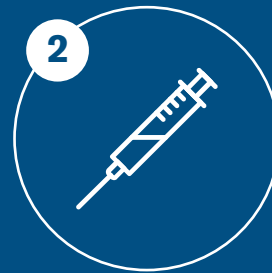
Offence	Description
Corrupt Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing, requesting, receiving, seeking, or accepting any benefit related to the manipulation of a competition or any other form of corruption.
Inside Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using or disclosing confidential information with or without benefit for the purposes of betting, manipulation of competition or for any other corrupt purposes. Giving or receiving a benefit for the provision of inside information regardless of whether such inside information is actually provided.
Failure to Report or Cooperate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Failure to report any approaches or invitations received to engage in conduct or incidents that could amount to a violation of the Code. ▪ Failure to cooperate or deliberately obstructing or delaying any investigation that may be carried out by ISSF in relation to a possible violation of the Code.

Additional Information	
Determination of Violation	<p>For the determination of whether a violation of the ISSF Code of Ethics has been committed, the following are not relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whether or not the participant is participating in the competition. ▪ The outcome of the competition. ▪ Whether or not the benefit or consideration was actually given or received. ▪ Nature or outcome of the bet. ▪ Whether the participant's effort or performance in the competition was affected by the acts or omission in question. ▪ Whether or not the result of the competition was affected by the acts or omission in question. ▪ Whether or not the manipulation included a violation of any ISSF rule.
Sanctions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Depending on the offence, it can range from warnings, fines, return of awards, disqualification, suspension, expulsion, ban on entering a competition or a venue or ban on taking up any shooting-related activity. The Ethics Committee may also decide to notify the case to the relevant law enforcement authorities.

SUMMARY SHEET



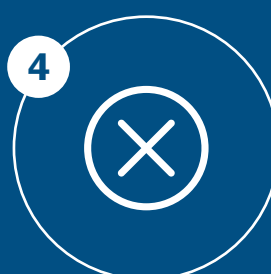
At the core of sport are certain ideals that **you should uphold**.



Doping is an offence and could result in sanctions.



You are subject to In-Competition and Out-of-Competition **testing**.



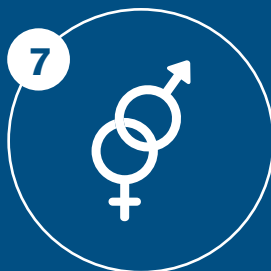
Check the **Prohibited List** of substances at regular intervals.



Knowing about **TUE** is essential in case you need medicines.



Competition manipulation damages both your image and that of the sport.



Harassment and Abuse is unlawful, be aware and stay alert.



Addressing an **ethical breach** depends on where and how it occurred.



If you are unsatisfied by a sanction, you can file an appeal at the **CAS**



Heard about the **IOC integrity and compliance hotline** yet?

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PART IV – NAVIGATING SHOOTING COMPETITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

SECTION 9: 10 THINGS ABOUT PARTICIPATING IN INTERNATIONAL SHOOTING EVENTS

Introduction

Based on your experiences, you might have realized that shooting in competition is very different to shooting in training. Apart from the pressures of competition, you have to be additionally aware of various aspects outside the realm of sport.

Travel, documentation, understanding the ISSF Championship Rules, keeping abreast with anti-doping rules, knowledge of registration and accreditation procedures are just some of the many details you will have to know about prior to and during competition. Since ISSF events occur around the world, you will also be required to keep yourself updated with the laws and regulations pertaining to the transport of firearms in each country of participation.

It is advisable to plan in advance for the various administrative procedures related to competition. One usually has several questions regarding the topic such as, “What are the eligibility rules to participate in ISSF Championships?”, “What are the sponsorship rules applicable to ISSF Championships?”, “How do I file a protest during an event?” and “Who are the officials I can approach?”.

This section provides answers to all these questions and helps you develop a well-rounded plan leading up to all events. You will have more awareness about the rules involved and the ways to address concerns through the relevant officials or procedures.



1. What are the eligibility rules to be aware of to participate in ISSF Championships?

The ISSF Eligibility Rules specify the conditions under which athletes are eligible to participate and are applied strictly to all ISSF Championships¹.

<p>National Federation Related</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The respective National Federation recognized by the ISSF needs to enter an athlete to an ISSF event. Usually, federations may enter a maximum of three (3) athletes per event and up to two (2) additional athletes to shoot “out-of-competition”. ▪ The athletes entered into the competition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Must comply with all procedures and special regulations that are set out by the National Federation or ISSF. ▪ Must be a national of the country they represent. <p>*Note that eligibility to participate based on nationality is determined by the respective national federation in accordance with the laws of the respective country. In case of disputed citizenship, participation is determined as per Rule 41 (Nationality of Competitors) of the Olympic Charter and the corresponding bye-laws.</p>
<p>Suspension Related</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An athlete who knowingly takes part in a competition vetoed by the ISSF may be suspended for a certain period. ▪ Athletes from a nation with a suspended National Federation may participate in ISSF events after seeking permission from the Executive Board, but as Independent Shooting Participants (ISP) under the ISSF flag, not the flag of their nation. ▪ An athlete under suspension for improper conduct such as doping, violence, racism and irregular or illegal betting activities is not eligible to participate. A National Federation that enters such an athlete into an ISSF event shall lose all its privileges except the right to be represented at the General Assembly. ▪ An athlete who has violated ISSF rules for sponsorship or advertising is not eligible to participate.
<p>Age-Related</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Athletes below the age of 21 on December 31st in the year of Competitions/Championships will be considered Juniors and may participate in all ISSF supervised Competitions/Championships and Olympic Games as members of their national team.

<p>Age-Related</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Juniors may participate in events conducted at a particular championship, either in the junior or in the senior category. ▪ If there is no junior category for a particular event in a championship, Juniors may participate in the senior category, even if they have participated in the junior category in another event in the championship.
<p>Gender-Related</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In case a female athlete is suspected of hyperandrogenism, an Expert Panel comprising of members of the ISSF Medical Committee and other experts shall be appointed to evaluate the case. ▪ Any athlete who undergoes sexual reassignment surgery after puberty and wishes to participate in ISSF events must be examined by the ISSF Medical Committee prior to competing. ▪ Any determination made on the above issues may be appealed exclusively to the Court of Arbitration for Sport and confidentiality shall be maintained by the ISSF to protect the dignity and privacy of the athletes.
<p>Finance Related</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participation in the Olympic Games and ISSF events is not conditional on any financial requirements from the athlete.

More information on the guidelines related to eligibility of athletes is available in Section 4 of the ISSF Rulebook: www.issf-sports.org/theissf/rules.ashx



2. How can one use a checklist to plan and manage participation in ISSF Championships?

Participating in various ISSF events involves frequent travel around the world.

Preparing an extensive checklist before travelling for competition or training is a good practice and can be used throughout your career. It can help you pay attention to details that you may otherwise overlook and ensure that you are prepared for challenges that you may encounter.

Athlete Specific Considerations	Event Specific Considerations	Venue Specific Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Firearm, Ammunition and Apparel requirements. ▪ Equipment Control regulations. ▪ VISA and Gun Permits. ▪ ISSF ID Number & Accreditation. ▪ Qualification documents (if required). ▪ Passport, Official Letters and other immigration documents. ▪ Dress Regulations (ISSF Dress Code) ▪ Food parcels and water bottle ▪ Travel Insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Travel schedule and airports involved. ▪ Registration and Accreditation formalities. ▪ Accommodation arrangements (Official Hotel) ▪ Shooting Range details. ▪ Daily transportation arrangements to and from the Range. ▪ Firearm & Ammunition storage arrangements. ▪ Firearm & Ammunition repair arrangements. ▪ Media & Press Conference Rooms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clothes that are specific to the local climate. ▪ Contact details of Embassy or Consulate. ▪ The local currency and cost of living. ▪ Duration of the journey, new time-zones and jet lag. ▪ Local cuisine and personal nutritional requirement. ▪ Maps and local transport guides. ▪ Tourist attractions around the venue. ▪ Emergency medical facilities.

3. While travelling for competitions, how can jet lag affect one's performance?

Athletes travel around the world to participate in various events and the long-distance flights may have an adverse effect on the body. Jet lag is a temporary disorder that causes fatigue as a result of air travel across time zones. This usually occurs because the internal system needs time to overcome the distortion from its set course and get accustomed to the new time zone.



The following are some common symptoms of jet lag²:

- Disturbed sleep
- Daytime fatigue
- Stomach problems, constipation or diarrhoea
- Difficulty in concentrating
- Sore muscles
- Menstrual irregularity (in women)
- Lack of energy

There are simple remedies available to reduce the effect of jet lag².

Before Flight:

- Pay attention to the arrival times. Athletes with midday arrival times have fewer jet lag symptoms than morning arrivals. Furthermore, athletes who have a shorter interval between their last full nocturnal sleep in the departure and destination cities, face fewer symptoms.

- Adjust your sleeping pattern a few days prior to your flight in accordance with the destination time zone.

During Flight:

- Set your watch to the destination time zone.
- Hydrate adequately.
- Eat small meals throughout the journey.
- Take naps in accordance with night time at your destination.
- Limit the use of electronic devices, wear loose fitting clothes and use an eye mask.

Post Flight:

- Freshen yourself and take a short nap, especially after trips going westward.
- Take a walk to increase exposure to sunlight and help the body adapt faster. It is advisable to take such a walk in the evening in case of a westward trip and in the morning in case of an eastward one.
- Limit the intensity of training for 1 to 2 days after arrival to reduce the risk of injuries.
- Avoid sugary foods and desserts for your first few days and reduce intake of caffeine later in the day.

In case of severe symptoms, you could consider taking certain non-prohibited medications like Melatonin and Zolpidem but only after consulting a medical professional who is aware of doping-related procedures. Moreover, you can take precautions by building your physical fitness as it can increase the ability of the body to adapt to new conditions.

4. What are the procedures related to travelling with firearms and equipment?

Before travelling to the event, you must make yourself aware of the rules, laws and regulations pertaining to the transport of firearms. It will vary from one country to another and from one airline to another. Clearance and immigration formalities are distinct and complicated, and you need to research and prepare all necessary documentation to avoid problems before, during or after a flight journey.

Here are some recommendations that could be useful:

- Declare the firearms and ammunition to be brought in the Firearm and Ammunition Form. On arrival at the airport, produce the form (in triplicate) to the Customs authorities for verification.
- The Organizing Committee usually makes prior arrangements for reception and clearance of firearms and ammunition at a designated airport. The name of the airport is intimated in advance, ensure that you are landing at that airport.
- Have a detailed conversation with fellow or senior athletes based on their experiences while travelling.
- Review the policies of your airline on their website. It is best to carry a printed version of the same before travelling.
- Review the Customs and Immigration Policies of the countries that you are flying from, through and into. Such policies are subject to change and it is best to check them every time that you need to travel. Apply for all the permits and permissions required in advance.
- You could disassemble a firearm and carry the parts, including the ammunition. But do this only if it's possible and if you have the sufficient technical expertise.
- Weigh your gun case and ammunition beforehand³.
- Carry your gun case in locked condition into the airport and when checking in, mention that you have a firearm to declare. Take the padlock keys of your gun case in your carry-on luggage³.
- Make sure to get all necessary forms well in advance. Arrange them in the order desired and have everything ready in time for your flight.
- Keep all the emergency contact numbers, especially that of your embassy, loaded on your mobile phone.
- Arrive at the airport well in advance of your flight to leave time for unexpected issues to be addressed.

5. What are the sponsorship rules that one should comply with at ISSF Championships?

There are various rules and regulations related to marketing and sponsorship during ISSF Championships. Sponsor markings on signs, banners, posters or other material can be displayed on athlete's clothing and equipment only if they are in accordance with these rules. Moreover, these rules are subject to change in case of IOC events like the Summer Olympics or Youth Olympic Games.

On-site advertising:

Athletes need to keep in mind that¹:

- Advertising on a range during an ISSF event cannot be placed in the target areas in such a way that they interfere with the sight pictures of the athletes.
- The ISSF reserves the right to control sponsor signs at the main entrance of the range, official scoreboards and score monitors, target frames and Bib Numbers.

Individual Sponsorship:

A sponsorship is any contract-based support provided to the athlete in the form of money, goods or services.

The following rules pertaining to sponsorship apply to all official parts of ISSF supervised events:

- Both an individual athlete and a National Federation may enter into a contract with a commercial firm or organization for sponsorships, the provision of equipment or advertising. These contracts can authorize the pictures, names or athletic performances of athletes to appear in advertisements.

A **manufacturer identification** is a display of the manufacturer name or of a trademark on a

product with the aim to identify the product and/or its origin. The identification could be either the manufacturer's name, logo or a combination of both.

- Only one manufacturer identification is allowed per equipment item/clothing/accessories. Gun parts are considered as items of equipment.
- No manufacturer identification is permitted on the blinder on the rear sight or on the front. It also can't be attached to the hat, cap, shooting glasses or to the headband.

A **sponsor marking** is any advertising sign created on a product. During training and competition, items with the sole purpose of displaying a sponsor marking are not allowed. The specifications related to the size and appearance of sponsor markings on items used by the athlete are explained in the table in the next page.

Previously no sponsor markings were allowed in IOC events like the Summer Olympics or Youth Olympic Games and the athletes could not allow their name, picture or sports performances to be used for advertising purposes during the event. However, IOC introduced a change in 2015 to allow advertising and sponsor marks under certain specific conditions. The implementation of this change in each country is the responsibility of the respective National Olympic Committee. You can approach your respective NOC for clarifications regarding usage of sponsor markings and appearing in advertisements, and subsequently initiate an application process if you can do so.

Table: Rules for Sponsor Markings¹

Category/Item	Applicable Rule	
1. Equipment		
Guns	No restrictions apply	
Other Equipment	No restrictions apply for Rifle Slings, Kneeling Rolls, Rifle Stands, Telescope Stands, Spotting Telescopes, Gun Cases, Shooting Bags, Suitcases and Cloth Bags etc.	
2. Clothing 2a. Competition Clothing	Applicable Rule	Other Restrictions
Outer Shooting Garment (Jacket, Vest, Shirt, Sweat Top, etc.)	Front: A maximum of 3 sponsor markings allowed in the shoulder and middle area (upper and middle thirds of the torso) and 2 markings allowed in the hip area (lower third of torso).	The left side of the shoulder area must be reserved for the ISSF emblem while the left side of the middle area must be reserved for the National Federation emblem and/or flag.
	Back: A maximum of 3 sponsor markings allowed in the hip area.	The shoulder area must be reserved for the name of the athlete and IOC abbreviation of the nation while the middle area is for Bib number only.
	Sleeve: A maximum of 1 sponsor marking allowed.	The same marking can appear on both sleeves.
Lower Uniform (Trousers, Shorts, Sweat Pants, Skirt, etc.)	A maximum of 1 marking allowed.	The same marking can appear on both legs of the lower uniform.

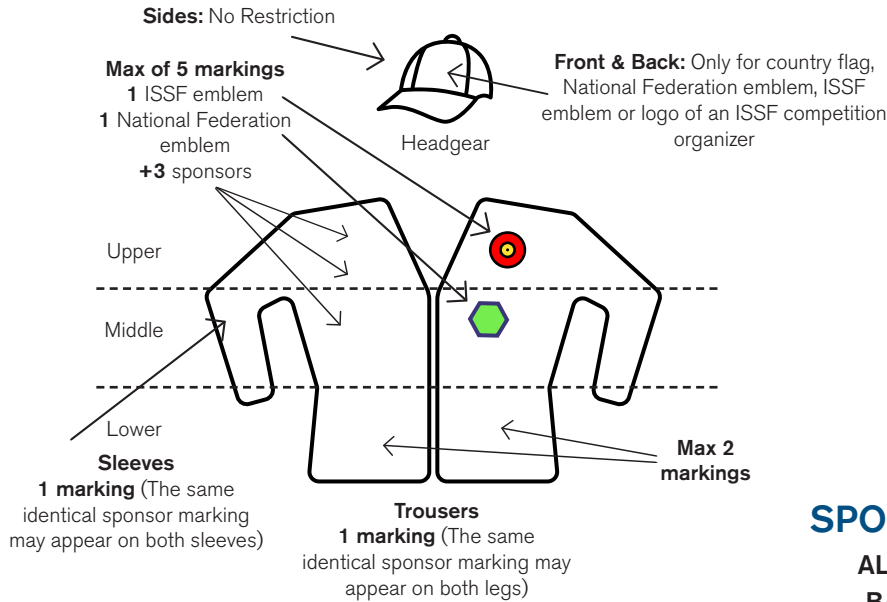
2b. Formal Uniforms		
Dress Uniform (clothing worn by the athlete and the members of the team during all official parts of the Championships, where protocol requires a display of the emblem, name or abbreviation of the national federation)	The name or trademark of up to 5 sponsors regulated by the National Federation are allowed.	The occurrence of 1 manufacturer identification or product technology identification on a dress uniform item does not count as sponsor marking.
2c. Casual Clothing (includes all clothing worn at the competition venue when the athlete is not competing or following the protocol in a dress uniform)	No restrictions apply	
3. Accessories		
3a. Belt, Towel, Socks, Water Bottle, Gloves, Eyewear, Shooting Glasses, Ear Protection, Footwear	No restrictions apply	
3b. Headgear (Hat, Cap or Headband)	No restrictions apply on the sides	Front and/or back only for either the country flag, national federation emblem, ISSF emblem or emblem of an ISSF competition organizer.
3c. Front / Rear Sight Blinders	No sponsor markings allowed	

More information on the guidelines related to commercial rights and sponsorship is available in Section 4 of the ISSF Rulebook: www.issf-sports.org/theissf/rules.ashx

SPONSOR MARKINGS (ALL)

FRONT of Outer Garment (Shown for Righthanded Shooter)

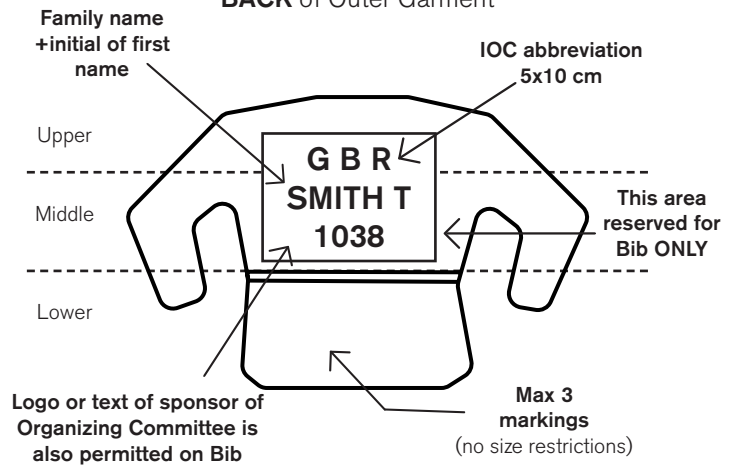
NO SIZE RESTRICTIONS



SPONSOR MARKINGS

ALL EXCEPT SHOTGUN

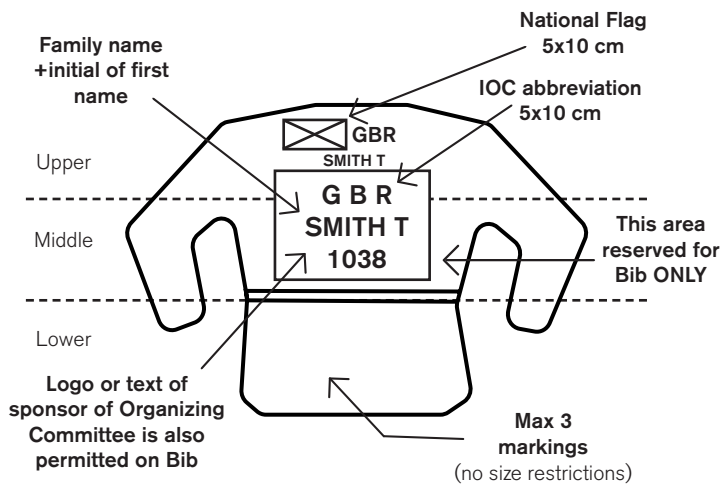
BACK of Outer Garment



SPONSOR MARKINGS

SHOTGUN ONLY

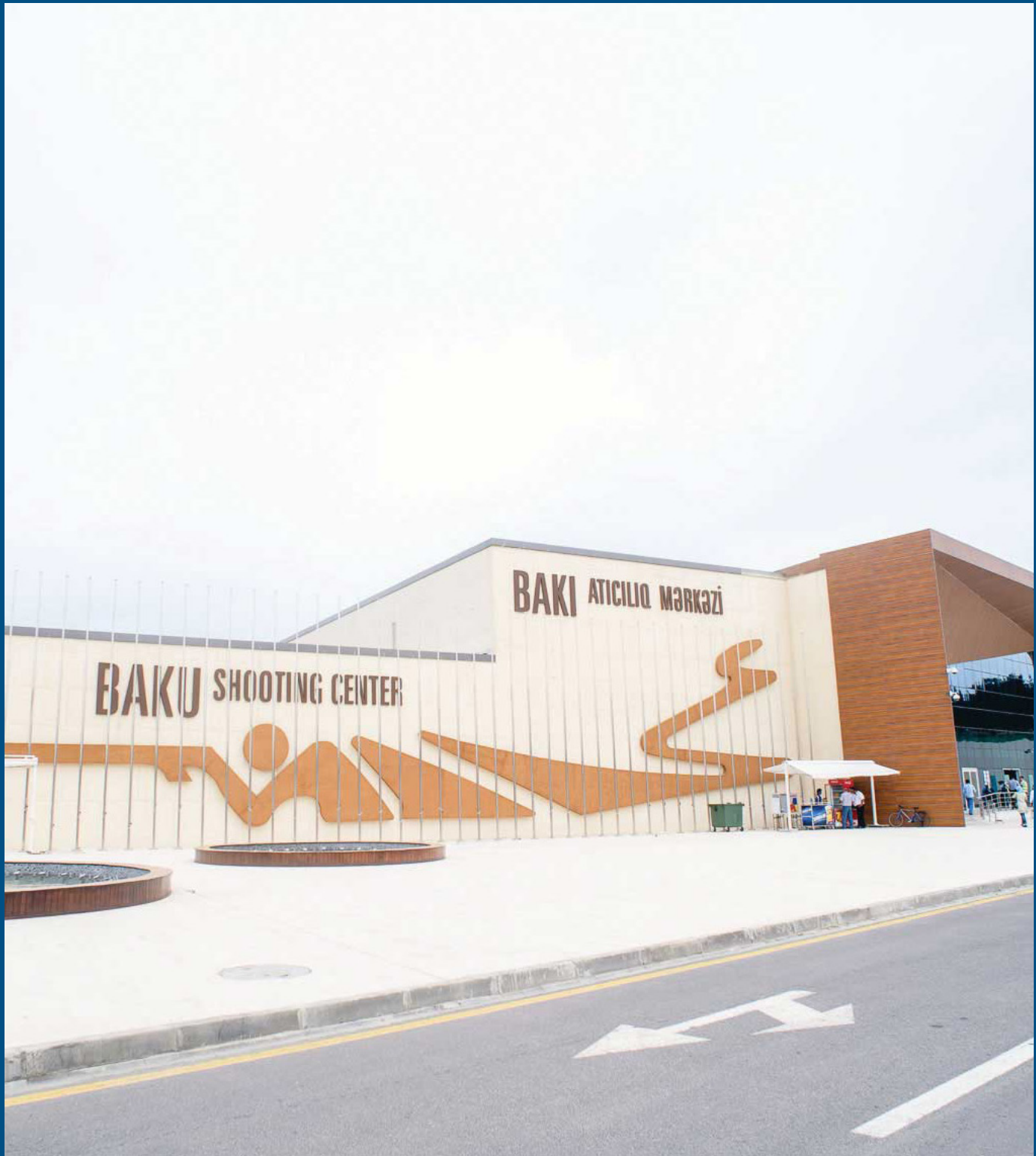
BACK of Outer Garment



Clothing Regulations for athletes at ISSF events:

- Clothing worn by athletes must comply with Clothing Regulations specified for each of the disciplines – Pistol, Rifle and Shotgun.
- All clothing worn in training, eliminations, qualifications and finals must be appropriate and convey a positive image of the sport.
- During competitions, athletes should wear sports-type clothing (training suits, tracksuits or warm-up uniforms) that incorporates or displays national, NOC or National Federation colors and emblems.
- Members of a team participating in a team event should wear the same uniform reflecting the nation they represent. During Victory Ceremonies or other ceremonies, athletes are required to be dressed in their official national uniform or national training suits.
- If shorts are worn during competitions, the bottom of the leg must be not more than 15 cm above the center of the knee cap. Skirts and dresses must also comply with this measurement.
- Prohibited clothing items for competitions and ceremonies include blue jeans, jeans or similar trousers in non-sporting colors, camouflage clothing, sleeveless T-shirts, inappropriate shorts, ragged cut-off shorts, trousers with patches or holes as well as shirts or trousers with non-sporting or inappropriate messages.
- Athletes cannot wear sandals of any type or remove their shoes (with or without socks).
- Changing clothes must be done in designated areas and not on the field of play. Changing on the firing points or in the ranges is not permitted.
- All clothing must comply with Sponsorship and Advertising Rules regarding the display of manufacturer and sponsor marks.

More information on clothing regulations is available in Section 6 (General Technical Rules) - Subsection 6.20 of the ISSF Rulebook: www.issf-sports.org/theissf/rules.ashx



Before travelling to participate in any ISSF Championship event, it is a good practice to create a comprehensive check-list. Travelling with firearms and ammunition requires documentation and declarations which vary from one country to another and from one airline to another. You should conduct research and complete all the legal procedures well in advance to avoid problems at the time of travel.



The ISSF Executive Committee appoints ISSF Technical Delegates, Jury Members and various other technical officials for every ISSF event. It is advisable to be familiar with the roles each of them plays so that you can address any concerns regarding the event appropriately and smoothly.

6. What are the accreditation and registration formalities required at the venue of the event?

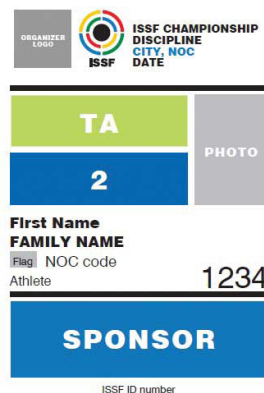
The ISSF Online Registration Service (under <http://entry.issf-sports.info>) enables all ISSF Member Federations to make preliminary and final entries for its athletes and officials online. The federations must forward the final entries only to the ISSF Head Quarters through the online platform before the Final Entry deadline (usually 30 days before the official Arrival day)⁴. On arrival, the Team Leaders of the delegations must report to the Organising Committee Entries Official and confirm their final entries on the day before the Pre-Event Training.

If the maximum number of athlete entries has not been reached, late entries will only be accepted until 3 days before the official arrival day. Any additional entries received after the Late Entry Deadline will not be allowed to participate. The Team Leaders of ISSF Member Federation Delegations must complete accreditation process for such entries.

Before participating in an ISSF event, athletes must sign an “Athlete’s Declaration” and have an official ISSF Identification Number (ISSF ID number) issued⁵. ISSF ID numbers can be obtained from the ISSF Headquarters by using the official application form. The respective member federations have to submit the applications and then, approve the list of ISSF ID numbers once it has been created by the ISSF. If you change your name or nationality, it has to be immediately communicated to the ISSF to make the necessary changes.

Accreditations for the athlete delegation will be prepared by the Organizing Committee based on the final entries and distributed after payment of the entry fees at the venue.

All persons involved in an ISSF event (Athletes, Team Officials, ISSF Officials, OC Officials, Media Persons) must have accreditations that clearly identify the accreditation holder (with photograph, family name and first name, nation and function) in order to use the local transportation and to enter controlled areas on the shooting range⁶.



Sample Access Card

ZONE	ENTITLEMENT
BLUE	Field of Play Operational Areas General Circulation Areas
RED	Operational Areas General Circulation Areas
WHITE	General Circulation Areas
YELLOW	Media Areas

Sample Zone Codes

These are the various categories that are considered for accreditation:

- IOC Family
- ISSF Family
- Authorities, Government Representatives, Distinguished Guests
- Officials and Jury Members
- Media – Journalists, Photographers, Broadcasters, Radio, Internet Journalists
- Athletes and Team Officials
- Organizing Committee - Management, Staff, Medical Services, Security, Service Providing Industry, Volunteers
- Official Sponsors and Suppliers
- Observers

7. What are the responsibilities of the various ISSF officials present at an event?

The ISSF Executive Committee appoints ISSF Technical Delegates, Jury Members and technical officials for every ISSF event.

Technical Delegates are responsible for examining the organization, ranges and facilities at an ISSF event, and for advising the Organizing Committee before and during the Competitions/Championships. They also submit reports to the Executive Committee regarding protests, untoward incidents and recognition of World Records.

The Jury members include Competition Juries and the Jury of Appeal. They are responsible for advising, assisting and supervising the competition officials appointed by the Organizing Committee.

Competition Juries supervise the conduct of events in their respective disciplines (Rifle, Pistol, Shotgun and Running Target). They also include:

- RTS (Results, Timing and Scoring) Juries who supervise scoring and results operations.
- Equipment Control Juries who supervise the testing of athletes' clothing and equipment.

The **Jury of Appeal** is responsible for making final decisions on all appeals against the decisions by Competition Juries. All Jury Members wear the official ISSF Jury vest (red colour) when on duty.

The technical officials include:

Chief Range Officer (CRO):

- CRO is in charge of all range officers.
- CRO is also responsible for giving all range commands and for ensuring the cooperation of range personnel with the Jury.
- CRO is responsible for the correction of any equipment failures and for making available the necessary experts and supplies to operate the range.

Range Officer (RO):

- They are appointed for each Range Section or for each ten (10) firing points.
- They check the names and Bib Numbers of athletes to ensure that they correspond to the start list.
- They ensure that the athletes' guns, equipment and accessories have been examined and approved and advise the Jury in case of any violations.
- They receive verbal protests and immediately report them to a Jury Member.

- They record all irregularities, disturbances, penalties, malfunctions, cross-fires, extra time allowed, repeated shots authorized, etc. on Range Incident Report Forms.
- They ensure that the commands of the CRO are followed.

Shotgun Referees:

- They ensure the conduct of each round of shooting and are ultimately responsible for the declaration of a hit or miss on a target score.
- They are responsible for the enforcement of equipment, clothing and technical rules.

Chief RTS (Results, Timing and Scoring) Officer:

- The CRTSO is appointed for every ISSF event. He or she is in charge of all RTS officers and is responsible for the correct conduct of all scoring and results operations at the event.

RTS Officers (RTSO):

- One RTSO is appointed for each range that is used for competitions.
- The RTSOs are responsible for working with the RTS Jury, Competition Jury, ROs and Official Results Provider to facilitate scoring and results operations on their ranges.

Official Results Provider: They are responsible for providing and operating the electronic technology necessary for the management of entries, athletes' results, competition operations, results presentation and results archiving.



8. What are the procedures related to filing and deciding protests during an event?

The ISSF establishes rules for appropriate conduct during its events. Athletes or teams participating have the right to protest when competitions are not conducted according to ISSF Rules and Regulations⁷.

The relevant ISSF rules regarding filing and deciding protests provide for the following:

- Verbal protests that can be submitted and decided on the ranges immediately
- Written protests to be decided by the appropriate Jury and
- Appeals of Jury decisions to be decided by a Jury of Appeal.

All officials involved with the filing of protests have unique responsibilities:

- Range Officers can receive all verbal protests at the range. They intimate the competition juries regarding the same.
- Competition Juries are responsible for receiving and deciding all protests.
- The Jury of Appeal makes the final decisions on all appeals against decisions by Competition Juries. Decisions by the Jury of Appeal may not be appealed.

For the final round, where protests must be decided immediately, a Finals Protest Jury consisting of two members of the Competition Jury and the Jury of Appeal is designated. If a protest is made during a Final, they are responsible for making an immediate decision regarding the protest. Finals Jury decisions may not be appealed.


In the final round, no score protest is permitted except for a failure to indicate a shot.

In the case of protests involving conflicts between the ISSF Constitution, ISSF General Regulations or Technical Rules, the ISSF Constitution shall take precedence over the ISSF General Regulations or Technical Rules. In conflicts involving IOC Rules, the IOC Rules shall prevail.

More information on the guidelines related to filing and deciding protests is available in Section 3 of the ISSF Rulebook:

www.issf-sports.org/theissf/rules.ashx

PROTEST FORM – PAGE 1

 ISSF	PROTEST FORM	P
Protest Information (To Be Completed By Athlete or Team Official)		
Event:		
Protest to Jury:		
Date	and time	of action or decision being protested.
Action or Decision Being Protested (describe in writing):		
Reason for Protest (also list ISSF Rules concerned):		
Protest Submitted By:		
		Name and Signature
Protest RECEIPT (To Be Completed By Official Receiving Protest)		
Protest received: Date:		Time:
Amount Fee Paid:		Received by:
Printed Name and Signature of official receiving protest:		

Sample ISSF Protest Form (*Note that this is a screenshot from “ISSF Official Statutes, Rules and Regulations” and is reproduced, with permission, for information purposes only.)

9. How are charges relating to a breach of ethical principles and rules dealt with?

Any complaints, charges or guidance relating to a breach of ethical principles and rules are to be addressed in writing to the Secretary-General or by sending an email to ethics@issf.org⁸. An Ethics Committee will be summoned at that juncture to decide whether to conduct an inquiry. The various breaches are explained in the table titled “ISSF Code of Ethics: Useful Information” at the end of Section 8.

The breaches are punishable by one or more of the following sanctions:

- Warning
- Fine
- Return of awards
- Disqualification
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Ban on entering a competition or a venue
- Ban on taking part in any shooting-related activity

The Ethics Committee decides the scope and duration of the sanctions.

The participant who is alleged to have committed a violation must be informed of the allegation, details of the alleged act, and the range of possible sanctions. The principle of confidentiality

is followed during all the procedures and the information is exchanged with entities only on a need to know basis.

It must be noted that all the athletes have a right to appeal by following the ISSF appeal procedures. Moreover, decisions taken by the Committee can be appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS). The time limit for appeal is fixed at twenty-one days after the reception of the decision concerning the appeal.

More information on the Code of Ethics is available in Section 3 of the ISSF Rulebook: www.issf-sports.org/theissf/rules.ashx

The sanction is imposed by taking into account all relevant factors in the case, including the offender’s assistance and cooperation, the motive, the circumstances and the degree of the offender’s guilt. The sanctions may be limited to a geographical area or to one or more specific categories such as a competition. Where more than one breach has been committed, the sanction shall be based on the most serious breach.



10. Who are the professionals to approach regarding travel and logistics?

Although the list of officials varies from one ISSF Championship event to another, there are several similar points of contact across all events. A few are mentioned below.

OFFICIAL	APPROACH FOR
Organising Committee Member	Accommodation, travel and registration related queries
ISSF Accreditation Officer	Accreditation related queries
ISSF Communication Officer	Public relations, Broadcasting and Advertising related queries
Doping Control Officer	Queries on Anti-Doping rules/test procedures
Chief Equipment Control Officer	Queries related to testing, inspection and qualification of Equipment/Apparel
Range Officer	Filing verbal protests
Shotgun Referee	Concerns and queries with respect to the conditions as well as filing verbal protests
Chief RTS Officer	Queries related to Scoring and Results Operations during the event
Chief Range Officer	Concerns and queries with respect to the shooting range
Competition Juries	Filing written protests and reporting violations
Technical Delegate	Queries related to facilities, verification of World Records as well as reporting serious ethical breaches (e.g., Sexual Harassment)

You can consult your National Federation for all other queries related to an event.

Sample Athlete Declaration and ISSF ID Number Application Form:

(*Note that these are screenshots from the ISSF Official Statutes, Rules and Regulations document and are reproduced, with permission, for information purposes only)



ISSF Athlete Declaration Page 1 of 2

- 1) To participate in ISSF Championships it is mandatory for all athletes to have an ISSF Identification Number (ISSF ID Number).
- 2) In order for an ISSF ID Number to be issued, the athlete's ISSF Member Federation must submit an application on the form that follows.
- 3) Each athlete must be a national of the country that they represent and must provide a copy of the passport with their application.
- 4) Each athlete may only apply for one (1) ISSF ID Number.
- 5) A fee of Euro 10.00 is charged for the issue of each ISSF ID Number.
- 6) The ISSF Member Federations must send all applications for ISSF ID Numbers to the ISSF. Only typed or e-mail application(s) will be accepted.
- 7) The ISSF will send the ISSF Member Federations a list with all new ISSF ID Numbers within 14 days after the application(s) are submitted. The ISSF Member Federations must check and approve this list and return it to the ISSF. No response will be taken as approval.
- 8) Express application (issue within one (1) week) increases the fee to Euro 20.00.
- 9) If an athlete changes his/her name or nationality, the ISSF must be notified without delay, so that necessary changes can be made by the ISSF. The original ISSF ID Number will not change, but the ISSF must correct data associated with the ISSF ID Number.
- 10) I am aware of the rules and regulations of the ISSF, including its Anti-Doping Rules. I agree to comply with such rules, regulations and procedures in the respective applicable version, to submit to the jurisdiction of the bodies which are in charge of applying them, and to be bound by any enforceable penalties deriving from my breach of these rules and regulations whether in the course of ISSF official competitions or out of competition.
- 11) I understand that I have important obligations under the ISSF Anti-Doping Rules and that I am liable for a breach of these obligations.
- 12) I agree to submit to testing when requested to do so and to respect all possible consequences arising from the doping control process.
- 13) I agree and consent to the ISSF collecting, processing, disclosing and using information for the purposes of the implementation of the ISSF Anti-Doping Rules in accordance with the International Standard for the Protection of Privacy and Personal Information and pursuant to applicable data protection laws.



ISSF Athlete Declaration Page 2 of 2

- 14) I agree that any dispute arising between myself and ISSF which cannot be settled amicably and which remains once the remedies provided for in the ISSF Regulations have been exhausted, shall be settled fully and finally by the Court of Arbitration for Sport in accordance with the Code of Sports-related Arbitration, to the exclusion of any recourse to ordinary courts.

Date:		Place:		Signature athlete:	
In case of minor age, name of legal representative:				Signature of legal representative:	



Application Form for the Issue of an ISSF ID Number

The ISSF Member Federation of

herewith applies for the issue of an ISSF ID Number which is necessary for the participation in ISSF supervised competitions and championships for the following athlete:

Family Name(s):

Given Name(s):

Maiden Name(s):

Nationality:

Gender:

Male

Female

Date of Birth:

Day

Month

Year

Event(s):

Rifle

Pistol

Shotgun

Target Sprint

Running Target

Name who signs for
federation:

Signature of federation:

Français:

1. Je reconnais avoir pris connaissance des règles et règlements de l'ISSF en vigueur, incluant les règles antidopage. J'accepte de me soumettre à ces règles et ces procédures dans la version respectivement applicable. Je reconnais la compétence des instances qui sont chargées de les appliquer et accepte d'être lié par les sanctions imposables pour une violation à cette réglementation, que ce soit en compétition officielle de l'ISSF ou hors compétition.
2. Je reconnais mes obligations en matière d'antidopage telles qu'énoncées dans les "ISSF Anti-Doping Rules" et conviens que ma responsabilité soit engagée pour toute violation de ces règles.
3. J'accepte de me soumettre aux contrôles antidopage lorsqu'exigé, ainsi qu'à respecter les résultats et conséquences découlant de ces contrôles.
4. Je consens et autorise l'ISSF à collecter, traiter, divulguer et utiliser certaines informations pour les fins de son programme antidopage en conformité avec le Standard international pour la protection de l'information privée et personnelle et autres lois applicables.
5. J'accepte que tout différend survenant entre l'ISSF et moi-même, lequel ne pourrait être réglé à l'amiable et subsisterait après l'épuisement des recours prévus aux réglementations de l'ISSF, soit tranché définitivement en conformité avec le Code de l'arbitrage en matière de sport, au Tribunal Arbitral du Sport (TAS) à Lausanne et ce à l'exclusion de tous recours aux tribunaux ordinaires.

German:

1. Ich erkläre hiermit, dass mir die Regularien der ISSF inklusive der ISSF Anti-Doping Regeln bekannt sind. Ich bin damit einverstanden, diesen Regeln, Bestimmungen und den dazugehörigen Verfahrensregeln in der jeweils anwendbaren Fassung unterworfen zu sein.
2. Ich erkenne an, dass ich nach dem ISSF Anti-Doping Regeln bestimmten Pflichten unterworfen und verantwortlich bin, wenn ich diese verletze.
3. Ich erkläre mein Einverständnis, mich den Dopingkontrolluntersuchungen zu unterziehen, wenn ich dazu aufgefordert werde, und sämtliche sich aus den Dopingkontrolluntersuchungen ergebenden Konsequenzen zu respektieren.
4. Ich erkläre mein Einverständnis und meine Zustimmung zur Erfassung, Verarbeitung, Veröffentlichung und Verwendung von Daten durch die ISSF zum Zwecke der Umsetzung der ISSF-Anti-Doping Regeln entsprechend dem Internationalen Standard Für den Schutz der Privatsphäre und persönlicher Informationen und gemäß den anwendbaren Datenschutzgesetzen.
5. Ich erkläre mich damit einverstanden, dass sämtliche zwischen mir und der ISSF entstehenden Streitigkeiten, bei denen keine gütliche Einigung möglich ist, nach Erschöpfung des verbandsinternen Rechtsweges, vor dem Internationalen Sportgerichtshof („CAS“) in Lausanne, Schweiz, gemäß dem Code of Sports-related Arbitration unter Ausschluss staatlicher Gerichte bindend und endgültig geregelt werden.

Español:

1. Confirmando tener conocimiento de las reglas y reglamentos de la ISSF, incluyendo su Reglamento Antidopaje. Me comprometo a someterme a dichas normas, reglamentos y procedimientos en la versión respectivamente aplicable, y a la jurisdicción de los organismos que se encargan de su aplicación. Además, estoy de acuerdo con estar sujeto a las posibles sanciones aplicables derivadas de mi incumplimiento con estas reglas y reglamentos, ya sea en el curso de las competiciones oficiales de la ISSF o fuera de competición.
2. Reconozco la importancia de cumplir con las obligaciones que me impone el Reglamento Antidopaje de la ISSF y que soy responsable por mi incumplimiento con dichas obligaciones reglamentarias.
3. Estoy de acuerdo en someterse a las pruebas de control antidopaje que me sean solicitadas y respetar todas las posibles consecuencias derivadas de dichos controles antidopaje.
4. Estoy de acuerdo y consiento que la ISSF recoja, procese, utilice y difunda la información necesaria para cumplir con los procedimientos establecidos en el Reglamento Antidopaje de conformidad con el Estándar Internacional para la Protección de la Privacidad y la Información Personal.
5. Estoy de acuerdo con que cualquier disputa que me enfrente a la ISSF, que no pueda resolverse amigablemente y que permanezca una vez que los recursos previstos en el Reglamento de la ISSF se hayan agotado-, será resuelta por el Tribunal de Arbitraje Deportivo en Lausana, Suiza, como instancia final y de acuerdo con el Código de Arbitrajes Relacionados con el Deporte (Código del CAS, por sus siglas en inglés), excluyendo cualquier recurso ante los tribunales ordinarios.

SUMMARY SHEET



To participate in **ISSF events**, abide by the eligibility rules.



Preparing **check-lists** before travelling brings long-term benefits.



Jet lag is bothersome; know the remedies to reduce its effect.



You don't want to be **stuck at an airport** because of your firearm!



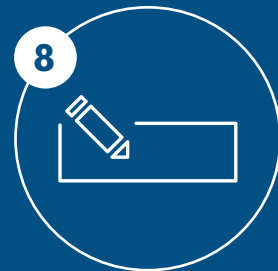
Using **sponsor markings** on your clothes is subject to rules.



Registration and Accreditation is necessary to participate.



Every **ISSF Official** present at the venue plays a specific role.



If you suspect unfair competition, you have the **right to protest**.



Breach of ethical principles is addressed by the **Ethics Committee**.



Do you know whom to approach for **filing verbal protests**?

REFERENCES

¹ISSF. (2017). Part 4 - ISSF Eligibility, ISSF Commercial Rights and ISSF Sponsorship/Advertising Rules. In Official Statutes, Rules and Regulations - Edition 2017 (Second Print 01/2018) (pp. 124-125). Munich: ISSF - International Shooting Sport Federation.

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³McHale, T. (2014, July 3). 10 Gun Tips You Need To Know About Flying With Guns. Retrieved from Beretta: <http://blog.beretta.com/10-gun-tips-you-need-to-know-about-flying-with-guns>

⁴ISSF. (2017). ISSF Entry Procedures 2017. Munich: ISSF - International Shooting Sport Federation.

⁵ISSF. (2017). Part 3 - ISSF General Regulations. In Official Statutes, Rules and Regulations - Edition 2017 (Second Print 01/2018) (pp. 60-62). Munich: ISSF - International Shooting Sport Federation.

⁶ISSF. (2016, December). Guidelines for Accreditation, Finals Ranges, Victory Ceremonies. Munich: ISSF - International Shooting Sport Federation.

⁷ISSF. (2017). Part 3 - ISSF General Regulations. In Official Statutes, Rules and Regulations - Edition 2017 (Second Print 01/2018) (pp. 84-85). Munich: ISSF - International Shooting Sport Federation.

⁸ISSF. (2017). Part 3 - ISSF General Regulations. In Official Statutes, Rules and Regulations - Edition 2017 (Second Print 01/2018) (pp. 79-82). Munich: ISSF - International Shooting Sport Federation.

All websites or document(s) from websites accessed as on March 31, 2018.

SECTION 10: 10 THINGS ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE THROUGH THE IOC

Introduction

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is the apex authority of the Olympic Movement. It is headquartered at Lausanne, Switzerland and functions as a non-profit, independent, international organization that coordinates with athletes and sports organizations across the world. It was created by Pierre de Coubertin, on 23 June 1894.

The IOC organises the Olympic Games and Youth Olympic Games, held in summer and winter, every four years. The first Summer Olympics organised by the IOC was held in Athens, Greece, in 1896 and the first Winter Olympics was in Chamonix, France, in 1924. Similarly, the first Summer Youth Olympics were in Singapore in 2010 and the first Winter Youth Olympics were held in Innsbruck in 2012.

One of the primary objectives of the IOC is to promote athlete welfare given that athletes are at the heart of the Olympic Movement. The IOC has launched the Olympic Agenda 2020 which serves as the strategic roadmap for the future of the Olympic Movement. It includes 40 recommendations that aim to strengthen the credibility of the Games and enhance its positive effect on society. Athletes remain at the centre of all these 40 recommendations.

Several programmes and initiatives have been launched over the years towards this objective and they continue to evolve and grow. You might be interested to know more of them. You may have heard about Athlete365, Olympic Solidarity Scholarships, the Athlete Career Programme and wish to seek information on these. This section of the handbook is aimed at throwing light upon several IOC resources and initiatives to enable you to make the best use of the opportunities available.

***Note that this section contains several links to websites and web pages that are active as on March 2018 but are subject to change.**



1. What is Athlete365?

Athlete365 is a new brand that has been created by athletes, for athletes, and which unites all of the IOC's athlete-focused initiatives and communication¹. Launched in 2018, Athlete365 aims to create an active, online community of elite athletes around the world and is available for download as a mobile application for android and IOS.

Athlete365 focuses on information sharing, athlete welfare and education. You can use it to seek support, knowledge and insight at every stage of your career. It provides content on essential topics that are both relevant and timely, and is divided into six key areas: voice, learning, finance, careers, well-being and Games-time¹.

It also features all the news and latest developments in international elite sport and is aimed both at competing and recently retired athletes.

Former and current Olympians have a unique login opportunity, and this provides for access to additional perks such as special offers, courses, programmes, the IOC resource library and online forums. It is similar to a social media platform like Facebook where you can sign up and connect with fellow athletes. This is especially useful during the Olympic Games as the platform provides support or information that may be needed to navigate through the competition. Moreover, Olympians can receive exclusive offers such as job opportunities and discounts. For example, jobs offered by IOC for working on projects such as the Athlete Career Programme are advertised here.

The web link to Athlete365 is olympic.org/athlete365



Home Page of Athlete365 as on March 2018

“The Olympic Athletes’ Hub (currently known as Athlete365) is central for us. It’s our main tool for communicating with athletes on a daily basis and we want to use it not only to provide information but also to build a community. We want it to be a virtual platform where athletes can find everything they need and we can provide them with the tools necessary to support them on and off the field of play.”

- Danka Bartekova

2. What is the Athlete Learning Gateway? What are the opportunities available through it?

The Athlete Learning Gateway was launched by the IOC and serves as a digital platform for elite athletes, coaches and other stakeholders to access and improve knowledge. The services available through the Gateway can be accessed free of cost at any point in time and from any location. It is open for all, and those interested need to complete a short Free Sign Up procedure.

The Gateway comprises of several short courses. These short courses are in the form of a series of video modules delivered by academicians and professionals from the world of sport. There are more than 30 free online courses to choose from and these courses are continuously revised to meet changing needs. Besides, you can also refer to and participate in the discussion forum created around pertinent aspects of elite sport.

The courses offer practical insights from top athletes, coaches and inspirational leaders². The Gateway also contains numerous articles and videos that can enhance knowledge, motivate, inspire and challenge existing notions. Through the discussion forum and comment threads, there is also an opportunity for frequent interaction and exchange of information.

The topics included are useful at all the various stages of your career. Some of the featured courses on the Athlete Learning Gateway include “Sports Medicine: Understanding Sports Injuries”, “Sports Nutrition: Eat to Compete”, “Safeguarding Athletes from Harassment and Abuse” and “Professional Sport Management”³.

The web link to the Athlete Learning Gateway is <http://onlinecourse.olympic.org/>

Athlete Learning Gateway

BOOST YOUR PERFORMANCE - SHAPE YOUR FUTURE

Sign up for **FREE** courses from world-leading institutions designed for elite athletes and their entourage.

VIEW OUR COURSES

Short Courses and Features

Take courses led by world renowned academics and sporting minds. Explore articles and videos from well respected sporting sites.

VIEW OUR COURSES

Have you visited our Community?

Engage with Olympic athletes, elite coaches and great sporting minds! You'll find exclusive insights and top tips here too.

JOIN THE DISCUSSION

Home Page of Athlete Learning Gateway as on March 2018

3. What is the IOC Athletes' Commission and its role?

The mission of the IOC Athletes' Commission is to represent athletes within the Olympic Movement and support them to succeed in their sporting and non-sporting careers. It was first established in 1981 and consists of a majority of members elected by athletes.

The IOC Athletes' Commission serves as a link between athletes and the IOC, through advising the IOC Session, the IOC Executive Board (of which the Chairman of the Commission is a member) and the IOC President in matters concerning the athletes.

The Commission has leading roles with athletes and with the Olympic Movement⁴.

With regard to the athletes, its strategy involves:

- Empowering athlete participation in the Olympic Movement decision making.
- Supporting athlete development in sporting and non-sporting careers.

With regard to the Olympic Movement, its strategy involves:

- Promoting athlete involvement in Olympic movement decision making.
- Ensuring athlete involvement in Olympic movement decision making.

If you want to become a member of the IOC Athletes' Commission, your candidature must be put forward by your National Olympic Committee (NOC). The IOC notifies all NOCs exactly one year prior to the opening of the Olympic Village at the next Olympic Games, inviting all eligible NOCs to submit a candidate. Following approval by the IOC Executive Board, candidates will be elected at each edition of the Olympic Games. Four members are elected at each Summer Games and two at each Winter Games. The IOC President may appoint additional members to ensure a balance between regions, gender and sports.

The IOC Athletes' Commission works in collaboration with athlete bodies of various sports organizations like International Federations, National Olympic Committees and the World Anti-Doping Agency. The members meet regularly throughout the year to discuss the topics that affect athletes the most. The IOC Athletes' Commission also conducts the International Athletes' Forum every two years to engage with the athlete community and seek feedback on the most important issues facing athletes.

If you want to contact the Athletes' Commission, you can do it through athletes@olympic.org

More information regarding the IOC Athletes' Commission is available at <https://www.olympic.org/athlete365/athletes-commission>

4. What is the IOC International Athletes' Forum and how can one participate?

The IOC International Athletes' Forum is conducted once in two years by the Athletes' Commission.

It seeks to meet key objectives like:

- Informing athletes about the latest strategies and programmes.
- Strengthening the voice of the athletes within the Olympic Movement.
- Consulting the athletes on key issues that matter to them.
- Empowering athletes to be leaders and ambassadors of the sport.

The Forum invites athlete representatives of a wide range of athlete bodies from organizations in the Olympic Movement, including⁵:

- International Federations
- Continental Associations
- Organising Committees for the Olympic Games
- World Anti-Doping Agency
- International Paralympic Committee
- World Olympians Association

In order to participate, you need to be part of such an athlete body and your name needs to be nominated by the relevant organization when approached by the IOC.

The discussion is centred around tackling key topics in the Olympic Movement. Athlete representatives can initiate discussion around themes and concerns brought up by the respective athlete bodies, through a series of breakout sessions, workshops and seminars. Such discussions can lead to the development of new ideas and the subsequent launch of programmes. For example, the Athlete Career Programme was born out of such a Forum that was held in 2002.

The IOC President is often in attendance and this offers athletes an opportunity to ask questions on the most pressing topics facing them. It is not just athletes at the Forum who can participate. In the build-up to and during the Forum, you can get involved too by submitting questions to speakers or representatives through the Athlete365 website.

Considering the range and number of athlete bodies involved in the event, the Forum provides a chance to further empower these bodies by the exchange and discussion of useful information and practices. You can forge stronger connections with athletes around the world and create consensus regarding issues.

The 2017 edition of the International Athletes' Forum was held at The Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland and witnessed the participation of about 100 athlete representatives. The ISSF is usually represented at the event by the Chairman of the Athletes Committee.

You can find more information regarding the Athletes' Forum at <https://www.olympic.org/athlete365/international-athletes-forum/>

5. How can an athlete benefit from the IOC Athlete Career Programme?

The Athlete Career Programme (ACP) was launched in the year 2002 as a follow up of the International Athletes' Forum and is delivered in co-operation with Adecco. It is aimed at supporting athletes to transition smoothly from their sports career to an alternate one. It has been created with the aim to make alternate careers as exciting as sports participation by developing relevant skills in an athlete and improving his or her motivation.

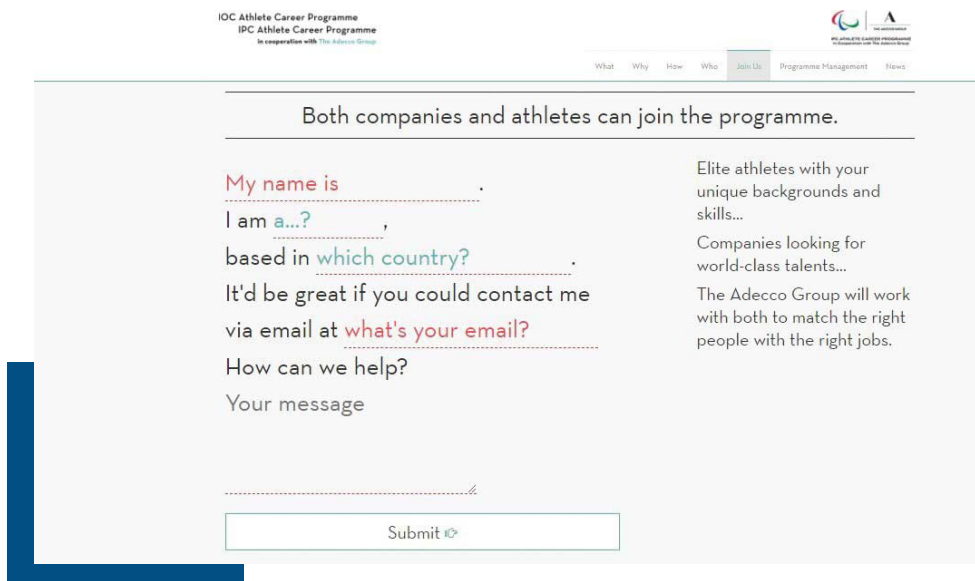
The programme is open both for active and retired athletes irrespective of the age of the participant. As an athlete, you can benefit from the programme by⁶:

- Understanding how your skills and assets can be transferred to an academic or workplace environment.
- Accessing resources, to make informed decisions about your future.
- Understanding the value of your current sports network, extending your professional network and making the most of professional opportunities and events.

The programme stands on three main pillars of education, life skills and employment. Each of these pillars includes extensive education material and training routines delivered based on the needs and resources of each athlete. In addition to the main programme, the ACP also delivers global workshops, providing information directly through in-person training known as “Outreach”.

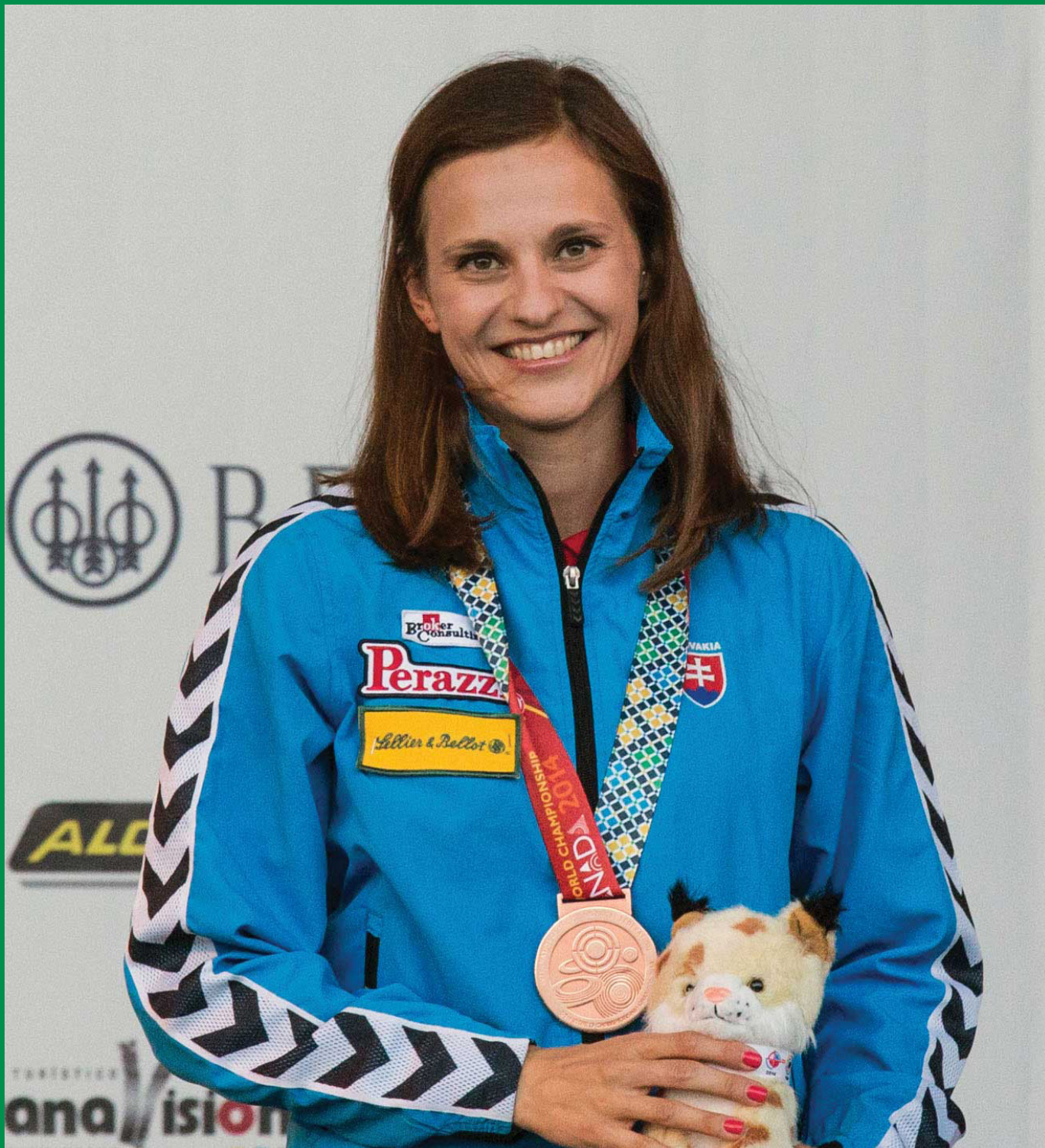
The Programme is open to both athletes and companies, who are looking to hire athletes. If you are interested in the programme, you could approach the respective National Olympic Committee or any other relevant athlete body associated with your sport or country. If your NOC is not currently participating in the Programme and does not have an alternative similar programme, you can contact the IOC at athletes@olympic.org regarding alternatives.

Moreover, you could also express interest on the website - <https://athlete.adecco.com>



The screenshot shows the contact page of the IOC Athlete Career Programme website. At the top, it says "IOC Athlete Career Programme" and "IPC Athlete Career Programme" with a note "In cooperation with The Adecco Group". There are navigation links: "What", "Why", "How", "Who", "Join Us", "Programme Management", and "News". The main heading reads "Both companies and athletes can join the programme." Below this is a form with the following fields: "My name is" (with a red asterisk), "I am a...?" (with a red asterisk), "based in which country?" (with a red asterisk), "It'd be great if you could contact me via email at what's your email?" (with a red asterisk), "How can we help?", and "Your message". To the right of the form, there is text: "Elite athletes with your unique backgrounds and skills...", "Companies looking for world-class talents...", and "The Adecco Group will work with both to match the right people with the right jobs." At the bottom of the form is a "Submit" button with a small icon.

Home Page of Athlete Career Programme
as on March 2018



“When I was only an athlete, shooting sport was my whole world. I was a shooting athlete, and everything was connected to just this sport. Now, I know the differences in sports and I respect all the athletes much more, because I feel that it is just so demanding to be an athlete. And at the same time, I have realized that athletes could positively contribute to society and the world. I also have a better understanding of what goes behind organizing the Olympic Games or Youth Olympic Games and how much effort, time and money is needed to organize such events. It has really been an eye-opening experience.”

- Danka Bartekova, Vice-Chair of the IOC Athletes' Commission.



Youth Olympic Games (YOG) is an initiative of the IOC to encourage young people to take up sports. It is a multi-sport event in which athletes between the age of 15 and 18 compete with the best in the world in that age bracket. The Youth Olympic Games are conducted once every four years. The first Summer Youth Olympic Games were hosted by Singapore in 2010 while Innsbruck was host to the first Winter Youth Olympic Games in 2012.

6. What is the World Olympians Association and how does it help Olympians?

The World Olympians Association (WOA) is an international alumni organisation for Olympians.

The mission of WOA is to be of service to Olympians, thereby empowering them to make the world a better place.

The main strategic goals of the WOA are to⁸

- Continuously strengthen WOA and streamline the various initiatives.
- Increase the number and efficiency of the National Olympians Associations (NOAs).
- Provide value and service to Olympians like life transition programmes and post-career health initiatives.
- Support sustainable community-based programs and initiatives.
- Extend WOA capacity and resources to those who most need it.

WOA currently has 148 NOAs. You can find details for your NOA in our NOA directory:
<https://olympians.org/olympians/nea-directory/>

Service to Olympians: WOA provides a range of offers to all Olympians around the world.

- Apply for your OLY post-nominal letters - <https://olympians.org/olympians/oly/>
- Apply for your olympian.org email address - <https://olympians.org/olympians/olympian-org-email/>
- Participate in WOA's largest ever Olympian Health Study – www.olympians.org/health

Service to Society: WOA's initiatives encourage Olympians to give back to their communities.

- Providing Service to Society Grants (to promote community projects led by Olympians) and Development Grants (to strengthen NOAs).
- Piloting a mentorship programme where retired Olympians offer advice and support to younger Olympians undergoing life transition.
- Supporting the development of Olympian art through its OLY Art Committee.

You can find more information at www.olympians.org



7. What are the Youth Olympic Games? What are the programmes organised for the growth and welfare of young athletes?

The Youth Olympic Games (YOG) are an international multi-sport event organised by the IOC. It involves the participation of 15-18-year-old athletes from across the world in various sports disciplines in both the Winter and Summer edition¹⁰. They are conducted once in four years and provide an opportunity for young athletes to get a feel of performing internationally at the elite level and prepare themselves to face the challenges that lay ahead.

Young Change-Makers (YCM) Programme :

This is an initiative that offers a chance for sports enthusiasts aged between 20-25 years to mentor young athletes participating at the YOG. They are selected by the respective NOC to join the national delegation. They are like the big sister or big brother of the athletes, sharing with them the main information and encouraging them to explore the different educational activities. They serve as a link between the NOC, IOC and the YOG Organizing Committee and also get a chance to be a part of campaigns or projects throughout the year. You can find out more about the programme here:

<https://youtu.be/oMBpYclyF64>

Athlete Role Models (ARMs) Programme :

An ARM is an Olympian who has had a successful and exemplary career and is willing to give back to the sport. Each International Federation (IF) of a sport on the programme of the Youth Olympic

Games is expected to appoint two ARMs per discipline:

- One male and one female athlete.
- One excellent English speaker with a wide international reach and one good Spanish speaker.

The goal of the ARM is to inspire and support young athletes by sharing their personal and sporting experiences.

In case you are interested in the YCM and ARM programme, you can contact your NOC and IF respectively for more information.

Besides the Games, there are various programmes launched by the IOC for the welfare of young athletes. They have been created around three broad themes:

- Protecting Clean Athletes – awareness on resisting cheating and becoming a better individual.
- High Performance – awareness of healthy eating and injury prevention.
- Athletes Beyond Sport – awareness about education, media, finance and legal matters.

You can find more information by clicking on the appropriate tab at Athlete365 - <https://www.olympic.org/athlete365> or by writing to YOGteam@olympic.org.

The screenshot shows the Athlete365 website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'ENGLISH' and a dropdown arrow, social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, the 'Athlete 365' logo, and links for 'LOG IN', 'SEARCH', and a menu icon. Below the navigation bar are three main content areas, each with a colored header and a white box containing text and links:

- PROTECT CLEAN ATHLETES** (Red header):
 - Become a better individual
 - [Anti-doping](#)
 - [Safe Sport](#)
 - [Manipulation](#)
 - [Olympic Values](#)
- ATHLETE PERFORMANCE** (Green header):
 - Better athletes perform better
 - [Healthy Cooking](#)
 - [Injury Prevention](#)
- ATHLETES BEYOND SPORT** (Blue header):
 - Be a better champion, be more awesome
 - [Education](#)
 - [Media](#)
 - [Finance & Legal](#)

Home Page of the Youth Olympic Games as on March 2018

8. How can an athlete benefit from Olympic Solidarity?

The Olympic Solidarity is one of the oldest initiatives of the International Olympic Committee. It was set up in 1960 to assist newly independent countries, particularly in Asia and Africa to develop their own structures to favour the expansion of sport at the national level. It organises structured assistance for the national Olympic committees to ensure that athletes with talent have an equal chance of reaching the Games and succeeding in the Olympic arena¹¹. The initiative is overseen by the Olympic Solidarity Commission.

They are divided into three main categories¹²:

- **World Programmes** - they are split into five units covering specific sports development activities (Athletes, Coaches, NOC Management and Knowledge Sharing, Promotion of the Olympic Values, Forum and Special projects).
- **Continental Programmes** – they meet the specific needs of National Olympic Committees based on the priorities of each continent.
- **IOC Subsidies for Participation in Olympic Games** – they support NOCs at three stages: before, during and after the Games.

To receive a scholarship, you need to perform well at the national and international level. If you receive a scholarship, you can benefit from funding for items such as access to adequate training facilities, specialised coach in your discipline, regular medical and scientific assistance, accident and illness insurance, board and lodging costs and travel to Olympic qualification competitions¹³.

For more information on Olympic Solidarity, you can reach out to your NOC or log on to <https://www.olympic.org/olympic-solidarity>

There are 7 Athlete programmes that are part of the World programmes. These programmes enable the transition of athletes from the grassroots to elite level, and eventually to a career after sport. They include:

- **Olympic scholarships:** If you seek to apply for a Solidarity scholarship, you must be selected by your NOC, who must send your candidature officially to Olympic Solidarity. Such candidatures are analysed in close cooperation with the International Federations (IFs) before the scholarships are awarded.
- **Athlete Career transition:** Technical and financial support is given to NOCs to raise awareness about Athlete Career Programme (ACP) or to support individual training courses for post athletic-career.
- **Refugee Athletes Support:** Support is provided to NOCs in countries that admit refugees so that they can identify and support elite refugee athletes. This includes a training grant and travel allowance to train for and participate in international competitions, as well as technical and financial assistance to identify athletes (in cooperation with UNHCR).



At the 2016 Olympics at Rio, 48 scholarships were awarded to athletes from the shooting disciplines¹⁴. South Korean shooter Jin Jong-oh, the gold medallist in the 50m Pistol event, was one among those who received it.

9. What are the initiatives taken by the IOC to promote Olympism in society?

In its efforts to build a peaceful and better world through the Olympic Movement, the IOC has been active in promoting Olympism In Society. Through its various initiatives, the IOC aims to promote non-discrimination, sustainability, friendship, solidarity and fair play¹⁵.

Some initiatives in this regard are briefly explained below:

- **Women In Sport:** The IOC works towards promoting the participation of women, not only at the Olympics but also in sports administration and leadership. The programmes are overseen by the Women in Sport Commission. One of the programmes involves the creation of an online collaborative learning group called as Advancing Women in Sport that connects women in sport and provides useful resources for leaders who support gender equality¹⁶. You can join the collaborative by registering at <https://www.hivelearning.com/advancingwomen/>
- **Olympic Value Education Programme:** It is a series of free and accessible teaching resources that have been created by the IOC. They help to promote child and youth development through an understanding of Olympism and its impact on individual health, education, and social interaction¹⁷. If you are interested in the programme, you can download the toolkit by completing a simple registration procedure at <https://secure.registration.olympic.org/ovep/en>
- **Sport For Hope:** This programme involves the construction of multi-functional sports centres in regions that are in dire need of sports facilities¹⁸. It provides an opportunity for people of all ages to engage in sport through a structured Sports For All approach. The Olympic Youth Development Centre in Lusaka, Zambia was the first project of the programme and you can read about it at <https://www.olympic.org/sport-for-hope/zambia>
- **The Olympic Study Centre:** It has been established with the mission to share Olympic knowledge with professionals and researchers through the provision of information and grants. If you are conducting Olympics related research from a humanities or social sciences perspective, you could apply for two research grant programmes¹⁹:
 - The Advanced Olympic Research Grant Programme: for established researchers.
 - The Ph.D. students' Research Grant Programme: for early career researchers.

Information regarding the grants is available at <https://www.olympic.org/olympic-studies-centre/research-grant-programmes>.

The link to the Olympic World Library is <https://library.olympic.org/>

- **Sport and Active Society:** The IOC, along with the Sport and Active Society Commission, have designed programmes and toolkits for all the organisations across the Olympic Movement to build projects that use sport as a means for social development²⁰.
- The toolkit that helps in the implementation of the programmes can be found at <https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/IOC/What-We-Do/Promote-Olympism/Sport-And-Active-Society/Sport-And-Active-Society-Programmes-Guide.pdf>

10. Who are the professionals to approach to know more about the IOC Programmes?

The IOC mostly works with the National Olympic Committees to design and implement various initiatives. It is best to contact the respective NOC for relevant details.

Most of the sports organizations in the Olympic Movement have designated athlete bodies like the Athletes Committee, Athletes' Commission or Athletes' Council. You could also approach individuals associated with these bodies regarding initiatives.

For information related to the World Olympians Association and the grants available, you could contact the respective National Olympians Association for further information.

Besides, you could access the online links mentioned through the document to access relevant information or establish a connection directly.

Web Links to various programmes and initiatives of the IOC

Athlete365	www.olympic.org/athlete365/
Athlete Learning Gateway	onlinecourse.olympic.org
IOC Athletes' Commission	www.olympic.org/athlete365/athletes-commission
IOC Athletes' Commission Strategy	www.olympic.org/athlete365/ioc-athletes-commission-strategy/
IOC International Athletes' Forum	www.olympic.org/athlete365/international-athletes-forum/
World Olympians Association	www.olympians.org
Olympic Solidarity	www.olympic.org/olympic-solidarity
Athlete Career Programme	http://athlete.adecco.com
Olympism in Society	www.olympic.org/the-ioc/promote-olympism
Official YouTube Channel	www.youtube.com/channel/UCTI3QQTvqHFjurroKxexy2Q

SUMMARY SHEET



Athlete365 unites all of IOC's athlete-focused initiatives.



Seek and improve knowledge through the **Athlete Learning Gateway**.



The **IOC Athletes' Commission** keeps athletes at the heart of Olympic Movement.



The **IOC International Athletes' Forum** helps forge ties among athletes around the world.



Done with sport? Learn about the **IOC Athlete Career Programme**.



World Olympians Association Grants can help you serve your community.



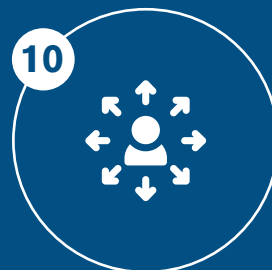
Youth Olympic Games help youth discover Olympic values.



An **Olympic Solidarity** scholarship could make your Olympic dreams come true.



Join Advancing Women in Sport if you support **gender equality**.



Contact your NOA today for all the latest **offers and opportunities**.

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PART V – PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

SECTION 11: 10 THINGS ABOUT SETTING CAREER GOALS

Introduction

Ten years from now when you look back at your shooting career, what do you hope to have achieved? The Olympic gold medal? A World Championship medal?

Setting short-term and long-term goals are vital to help you achieve your dreams. It is important for you to have specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, time-bound, enjoyable and re-evaluable goals. Moreover, you are more likely to achieve your goals when you are inherently motivated about them rather than when you are prodded on by external sources such as coaches.

The efficiency of goal setting depends on the methods used, and they vary based on the level of motivation and scale of achievement desired. Goal-setting demands dedicated effort and can help individuals or teams reach their peak potential through the optimum utilization of resources available.

This section will help you understand goal setting and address queries such as “How can setting goals affect my performance?”, “How can I monitor and evaluate progress towards my goal?” or “Who are the professionals that I can approach to assist me with effective goal setting?”.



1. What are the types of goals one can have?

Goals can be categorized as individual or team goals depending on whether they involve one person or a group with a shared objective. In sports, they depend on the nature of the game being played. For example, an athlete in shooting sport could have a goal of winning a gold medal at the Olympics but in the case of football, a goal of winning a tournament is a team goal. Also, people within a team can have individual goals that need to be related to the overall team goal.

Based on the timeline involved, goals can be either short-term or long-term. Short-term goals have a shorter time frame and are regarding the immediate future. Generally, many short-term goals are aligned together to create a long-term goal. Long-term goals have a longer time frame and are regarding broad objectives that one desires to meet in life. For example, a long-term goal could be about winning an Olympic medal and the short-term goals could be about specific training routines to be included in the following three months.

Based on the results desired, goals can be of three types - outcome goals, process goals or performance goals¹.

Outcome goals are about specific outcomes that one desires to achieve in a competition or in life. They provide the big picture but are not entirely in one's control. In sports, they are primarily focused on the result of winning. These goals could lead to frustration and anxiety if not managed effectively. Winning a gold medal at an event in the Olympics is an example of an outcome goal.

Process goals are about the various small steps involved in achieving the outcome. They are mostly in one's control and can be designed to achieve the outcome step-by-step. In sport, they consist of the training goals based on correct execution of a skill or a technical movement. Executing a new breathing technique

successfully in a competition is an example of a process goal.

Performance goals are about improvements desired in the execution of a task, irrespective of the outcome achieved. These goals are solely within one's control and not influenced by external standards. They are especially relevant in sports since outcomes are scrutinized despite admirable performances by athletes. Improving the final score attained in an event by a margin of 5 points is an example of a performance goal.



All the three types of goals have roles to play in directing positive behaviour and promoting achievements.

While the outcome goals provide the motivation and direction required to make training routines meaningful, the process and performance goals help to focus attention on specific aspects of skill execution.

2. How can setting goals impact sports performance?

Participating in sport involves achieving specific outcomes based on the ability and efforts of an individual or a team. Goal setting is a process that can facilitate that by enabling the creation of a detailed roadmap based on the various resources available.

There are various ways in which goal setting influences sports performance:

- It enables the development of a realistic long-term vision.
- It leads to better awareness of one's skills and abilities.
- It directs one's attention to the tasks performed.
- It mobilizes one's resources.
- It encourages persistence in the face of failure, adversity or lack of immediate progress.
- It provides the means for constant structured learning.
- It leads to indirect psychological benefits like reduced anxiety and improved self-confidence.

When the goals set are challenging, subtle adjustments are required in the training routines. This encourages the creation of new task solutions, leading to innovation and individualized learning.

In addition, goal setting can lead to the development of new learning strategies. For example, if you decide to improve your balance, you will have to account for it in training routines

along with the practice of various other technical skills. This may lead to a new routine that is unique, specific to your needs, one that could also benefit fellow and junior athletes.

Moreover, goal setting also improves coordination and teamwork as it involves constant monitoring and evaluation. This promotes structured interaction with coaches, peers and other professionals involved, leading to supportive relationships that have a positive impact on learning and performance. For example, regular evaluation of short-term training goals can serve as points of discussion with your coach, ensuring timely and consequential interactions about your performance.



3. How can one set SMARTER goals?

One of the most common ways of setting goals is the SMARTER way. It stands for Specific, Measurable, Action-Oriented, Realistic, Time-bound, Enjoyable and Re-evaluable¹. This concept secures the effectiveness of both short-term and long-term goals.

S-Specific: Clarity is an important aspect of goal-setting that enables one to clearly focus on the efforts required while performing tasks. Goals must be defined in precise and behavioural terms rather than through vague phrases like “Do my best”. For example, “I will work to improve my core stability over the next six months.”

M-Measurable: Having goals where one can check progress by measuring certain aspects, help to analyse the efforts made and make timely adjustments. These aspects are generally referred to as indicators. For example, the difference between the highest and lowest score achieved could be an indicator of the consistency you have achieved through psychological training.

A-Action Oriented: Goals need to involve well-articulated tasks or strategies that promote effort on a daily basis. These strategies should ideally include technical, physical and psychological aspects to be incorporated into training routines. For example, improving concentration to a higher level within a time period of six months by working on the holding technique, aerobic fitness and emotion regulation.

R-Realistic: Goals could stretch the abilities and be challenging but need to remain possible at every step. Factors like age, skill level, competition calendar and physical fitness need careful attention. For example, two months after recovering from an injury, winning the gold medal at an event could be an unrealistic goal whereas achieving the minimum qualification score could be a realistic one.

T-Time-bound: A reasonable amount of time needs to be allotted for each of the goals by establishing a definite link between short-term and long-term objectives. A deadline works as a target date and helps to focus efforts to achieve something within that time. For example, if you want to be able to hold a plank exercise for five minutes, you could allot a time period of three months and break down the improvements into smaller units that can be achieved gradually over several weeks.

Enjoyable: Achievement of the goals needs to bring joy and satisfaction. The goals set should be in accordance with individual needs, interests, dreams and past experiences. Moreover, there need to be proper channels to seek feedback. Pursuing a process goal like mastering a breathing technique or controlling arousal effectively could be more enjoyable than an outcome goal like winning a competition.

Re-evaluable: Goals need to be designed in a way that offers a chance to periodically review the methods adopted to pursue them. Regular documentation about the progress made is useful not only to focus clearly on the tasks of the present but also to analyse efforts made in the past. For example, you could list all your training goals for the following six months on index cards and make a note whenever you complete the tasks involved. These cards can be used both as a reference prior to practice and for discussions with your coach about performance.

It is best to limit the number of goals set initially; too many goals could dissipate energy and divert attention from the tasks while making monitoring impossible. You could start with one or two short-term goals and gradually add to the list. The achievement of numerous such goals will enhance motivation and performance.

4. What is ‘fixed’ and ‘growth’ mindset? How does it influence goal setting?

Mindset refers to the set of assumptions, perspectives and notions held by an individual or a group. It shapes one’s worldview and belief about one’s own potential. It forms the basis of all decision-making exercises and can either inhibit or promote the adoption of new behaviours. **The utility of goals and goal setting is influenced by the mindset involved.**

Mindset is considered to be either ‘fixed’ or ‘growth’². A fixed mindset involves the belief that performance is determined by the amount of talent or ability that one possesses by birth³. Individuals with a fixed mindset avoid challenges, view effort as pointless, are indifferent to feedback and feel threatened by other’s success. A growth mindset involves the belief that performance is determined by the amount of effort and nature of practice devoted to a task³. Individuals with a growth mindset embrace challenges, persist through hardship, value effort over outcomes, learn from criticism and from the success of others.

The belief associated with a mindset is based on the interpretation of life experiences. These interpretations have an effect on thoughts, emotions and self-awareness, which in turn impact performance. Beliefs can be helpful (“I am hardworking”, “I am confident”, etc.) or unhelpful (“I don’t have it in me to win the match”, “I am not good enough”, etc.). Adapting to a growth mindset involves the incorporation of helpful beliefs. Such beliefs are based on the premise that performance gaps between competitors are not a predictor of future outcomes, but an indicator of the effort required.



A fixed mindset and the limiting beliefs that come with it could make one reluctant to learn new training strategies, forego opportunities and underachieve. Such a mindset generally leads to the creation of outcome goals that are not entirely in one’s control. On the other hand, a growth mindset can ensure continuous learning and provide long-term benefits, irrespective of the outcomes achieved. It leads to the prioritization of process or performance goals and enhances the effectiveness of goal setting.

5. How does one's motivation influence the pursuit of one's goals?

Motivation is defined as the “process that influences the initiation, direction, magnitude, perseverance, continuation and quality of goal-directed behaviour”⁴. It comes from both internal and external sources and influences the amount of effort that is needed to achieve goals.

Motivation is based on an individual's personality, the environment or the interaction of both these factors³. It could be either intrinsic or extrinsic:

- intrinsic when it is linked to the inherent satisfaction of undertaking an activity or task⁵.
- extrinsic when linked to factors like fear or reward that are outside of one's control.

The effectiveness of goal setting is higher when one is intrinsically motivated to achieve it rather than when one is motivated by external factors.

This, in turn, is dependent on the level of

autonomy one experiences regarding the efforts and decisions⁶. Autonomy refers to the belief that one has control over one's own actions and is enhanced by having the opportunity to determine:

- What one intends to achieve?
- Why is it important to achieve it?
- What are the prices one needs to and is willing to pay?

For example, you could go about pursuing the goal of mastering a new holding technique by just requesting your coach for a new training routine. On the other hand, you could put in efforts to determine why it needs to be done, how it will improve performance and what it will take to master it. This will improve your motivation and the chances of achieving the desired result. You will be able to shift from a point when you think, “I need a better holding technique” to a point when you believe, “I will improve my holding technique.”



“I had to get myself so psyched up for the final – I knew that everyone I was competing against had been in an Olympic final before. You have to mentally flip a different switch and almost be a bit arrogant and cocky with yourself in your head. I told myself, I deserve to be here. I have done everything I can. I am going to go out there and do it.”

- Amber Hill, on preparing mentally for the Olympic Games Rio 2016¹¹.



A fixed mindset and the limiting beliefs that come with it could make one reluctant to learn new training strategies, forego opportunities and underachieve. On the other hand, a growth mindset can ensure continuous learning and provide long-term benefits, irrespective of the outcomes achieved.



It is advisable to consider the difference between results and your personality. You produce certain results, but you are not your results. It means that if you succeed in achieving your goals, it doesn't mean you are a success. And if you fail at achieving your goals, it doesn't mean you are a failure. If you can separate the process and performance from the outcome, you can celebrate irrespective of whether you have succeeded or failed.

6. What is 'performance profiling'? How can it contribute to a goal setting strategy?

Performance profiling is an athlete-centred performance assessment strategy based on a theory of personality that behaviour is dependent on how an individual interprets situations and events⁷. This technique encourages athletes to reflect upon and identify the key qualities that are required to achieve further in their career. It involves an exercise where athletes create a graphical representation of their abilities by rating themselves on certain qualities. Such a representation is referred to as a performance profile and serves as a guide to develop specific training routines.

Performance profiling works as an ideal precursor to a structured goal-setting exercise because it:

- Raises self-awareness about abilities and level of performance.
- Helps to clearly identify the aspects to work on.
- Offers a chance to feel a sense of autonomy and develop intrinsic motivation.
- Provides greater control over one's own professional development.

Any effective goal setting strategy includes the following three stages:

- Identifying the desired results based on aspirations and abilities.
- Educating yourself about various ways of goal setting.
- Adopting the most appropriate methods to achieve the desired results by creating SMARTER goals.

It is best to use performance profiling in the first stage to enable concrete self-assessment and clearly identify key focus areas for your training and practice. As opposed to a system where the coach reviews performance and dictates the routines, this technique enables you to understand what you need to improve and why you need to it.



SAMPLE PERFORMANCE PROFILE FOR A RIFLE SHOOTER (O=IDEAL, X=CURRENT)⁷

ATTRIBUTES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	IDEAL	CURRENT	DIFFERENCE
TECHNICAL													
Shot Routine	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	10	7	3
Preparation	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	10	8	2
Hold	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9	7	2
Inner Feeling	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	8	6	2
Trigger Control	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9	8	1
Aiming	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	8	7	1
Timing	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	6	6	0
Sighting	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	8	8	0
Breathing	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9	7	2
PHYSICAL													
Fitness	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9	4	5
Stamina	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	8	4	4
Cardio	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	8	4	4
Core Stability	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9	7	2
Strength	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	8	6	2
Breathing Control	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	7	6	1
Balance	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	8	5	4
Flexibility	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	8	6	2
Knee, Hip Stability	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	8	5	3
PSYCHOLOGICAL													
Refocus	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	8	5	3
Positive Thinking	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9	7	2
Concentration	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9	7	2
Self-Confidence	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	10	6	4
Mental Preparation	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9	7	2
Visualising	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9	8	1
Self-Awareness	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	8	6	2
Performance Under Pressure	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9	7	2
Ability to Analyse	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9	7	2
Consistency	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9	5	4

7. How can one monitor and evaluate progress towards goals?

Goals help to make the best use of opportunities available to realize one's dreams. However, there lies the risk of them ceasing to be effective if one loses track of the progress or gets de-motivated by short-term results. Proper monitoring and evaluation done at regular intervals can address this problem and ensure that the desired result is successfully achieved step-by-step.

Monitoring and evaluation refer to the process of managing outcomes by establishing links between the past, present and future actions⁸.

It enables one to track the progress of ongoing activities and understand the reasons behind the level of performance. They further assist in making timely adjustments and adaptations, as and when they are required.

The process involves the use of indicators. An indicator is an aspect of training or performance

that is specific, observable, measurable and can represent the progress made towards a goal. The choice of indicator depends on the nature of goals set. For example, if you are pursuing a performance goal of becoming more consistent, the difference between the highest and lowest (per shot) score achieved during an event can serve as an indicator. On the contrary, if you are pursuing an outcome goal of winning a competition, the result itself serves as the indicator.

There are several methods and tools available to document the progress made. You could use a method that works best for you – creating display lists, visible tables, charts, using index cards, training logs or a register of goals achieved. Methods that require a devoted effort to periodically write down can ensure autonomy and commitment. Based on a review of the selected indicators, the reasons for the current state can be evaluated and timely adjustments can be made through discussion with your coach.

Sample Monitoring and Evaluation Table:

Goal: Improve score in a 10-shot series from 90 to 94 in 4 months (10 m Air Pistol)

	EE	ME	BE	HS	Reason for deviation	Action plan for next month
Month 1	>91	91	<91	91.5	On Track	
Month 2	>92	92	<92	89.4	Performance decreased due to recurrent pain in lower back	Work with the physiotherapist to improve condition.
Month 3	>93	93	<93	92.2	Performance improved but not as much as desired due to anxiety issues.	Consult psychologist. Take feedback from the coach and discuss improvement in breathing technique.
Month 3	>94	94	<94	93.8	Target almost achieved! Happy with the result	

In this table, EE = Exceeds Expectation, ME = Meets Expectation, BE = Below Expectation and HS = Highest Score. The athlete has set a SMARTER goal and defined how they are going to monitor and evaluate the progress. This helps them course correct, stay on track and finally achieve the goal.

8. How can effective communication and feedback contribute to the pursuit of a goal?

Communication involves sending, receiving and interpreting messages through different channels⁹. It involves two components: informational and emotional. The effect of a message depends not only on what is conveyed but also the way it is conveyed. Communication can be either verbal (speaking/writing) or non-verbal (facial expressions, gestures, body language and positioning).

Feedback is defined as task-specific information about the consequences of practice efforts and can be provided during or after practice¹⁰. It is ideally simple, clear, concise, constructive and focused on performance improvements. Feedback can be either extrinsic where the information is provided by an outside source (usually the coach) or intrinsic, which is based on self-assessment.

Communication with the coach and the feedback mechanisms involved are crucial for dealing with setbacks, analysing poor performance and making appropriate changes in the training methods.

On the contrary, poor communication could have a negative impact despite best individual efforts.

Here are some features of effective communication:

- Direct, complete and specific.
- Athlete-centred: where the athlete has an equal say in decision-making.
- Consistent behaviour.
- Consistent non-verbal messages.
- Separation of positive and negative messages.

The individuals with whom you are communicating, need to have a clear understanding of the goals you have set and the reasons you have set them.

As for feedback, you should always seek it in a way that challenges you to self-assess and develops your problem-solving skills while reducing reliance on external guidance. Constructive feedback that involves future-oriented instructions will encourage you to take more ownership of your performance and your life.



“It is extremely relevant, to every athlete, to know their coach knows what they are doing, that they trust their coach. Knowing that the coach is working 24/7 on improving knowledge and figuring ways to implement new things in our training routine is something that makes me very proud, but it also pushes me to be a better athlete.” - Zorana Arunovic

9. What process can one follow upon receiving the results of a goal setting exercise?

Setting goals and regularly monitoring them increases the chances of achieving an outcome but does not guarantee it. When one expends effort to achieve a goal, there is a probability of either succeeding or failing in the pursuit.

Irrespective of the result, there are certain points to consider:

Acknowledgement: It is natural to have an emotional reaction to the result – you may either feel elated or disappointed. It is necessary to give yourself permission to acknowledge and express your emotions. It is an integral part of accepting the result and moving forward.

Separation of results from the individual: It is advisable to consider the difference between results and your personality. You produce certain results, but you are not your results. It means that if you succeed in achieving your goals, it doesn't mean you are a success. And if you fail at achieving your goals, it doesn't mean you are a failure. Such a mindset can ensure that you celebrate and remain positive, irrespective of whether you have succeeded or failed.

Learning: The pursuit of goals provides the chance to learn from the experiences involved and develop supportive relationships. Based on your learnings, you can use methods like performance profiling to identify your strengths, the methods that have been effective, the people who are truly supportive and the areas to improve in the future.

Goal Re-setting: Once the learnings and emotions are taken into consideration, one could formulate the next steps to further achieve. Documenting the experience and reviewing it will be useful to reset your goals and can also help you to share wisdom and inspire others.



10. Who are the professionals to approach for assistance with goal setting?

The people to approach might be different during and after your career. During the career, it is usually your coach or senior athletes who can assist you with setting and monitoring your goals.

All shooting sport professional coaches who have attained a minimum level of **C-License** from the ISSF Academy are trained in goal-setting and performance profiling. You could use your networks to seek such individuals and discuss your aspirations.

Executive coaches are professionals who are trained in planning, monitoring and executing goals. They can offer new perspectives regarding the pursuit of long-term goals and build your identity and leadership outside of sport. Therefore, consulting them will be useful.

The career of an athlete can be short-lived and uncertain. However, post-retirement, there are many options to choose from and if planned, you can excel at what you choose. Approaching professionals with expertise in goal setting can not only boost sport performance but also help leverage the skills learnt through sport to achieve life-long success.





"You need the goal to enjoy the journey and it shouldn't be taken for granted. But it's important to constantly look back and see what you have learned because that may not happen if you focus only on the goal. You shouldn't lose track of the present moment. The only way to enjoy the sport and stay effective is to stay in the present moment and not in the dreams for your future. ...develop a goal, but enjoy the process because that is the best part."

- Niccolò Campriani

SAMPLE GOAL SHEET

What are the tangible goal(s) that you would like to achieve?

- Short-term (3 months / 6 months / 1 year):
- Medium-term (3-5 years):
- Long-term (> 5 years)

Why are these goals meaningful to you?

What are the existing strengths that you will rely on to achieve your goals?

What are the new strengths that you will develop through pursuing these goals?

What are the limiting beliefs that could get in your way? What empowering beliefs will you replace them with?

How will you monitor and evaluate the progress towards your goals?

Who are the people who will help you as you work towards achieving your goals?

SUMMARY SHEET



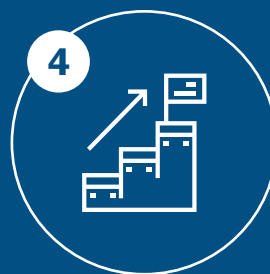
Goals can be **outcome, process** or **performance** based.



Goal setting can lead to the development of new **learning strategies**.



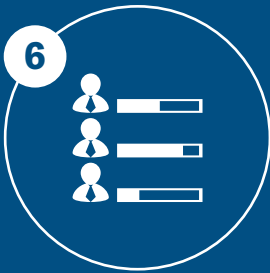
Setting **SMARTER** goals helps achieve results better.



Adapting to a **growth mindset** promotes helpful beliefs while pursuing goals.



Developing intrinsic **motivation** is ideal for goal setting exercise.



Performance profiling works as a **good precursor** to a goal-setting exercise.



Pursue a goal. Take a break. **Monitor. Evaluate. Proceed.**



Expect feedback that is fair, clear and **future-oriented**.



You are not your results! You only **produce results!**



Met an **Executive Coach** yet?

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EDITORIAL BOARD



Dr. Kevin Kilty

Dr. Kevin Kilty is currently the Chairman of the ISSF Coach Advisory Committee. He is the Head Shotgun Tutor of the ISSF Academy and holds an ISSF "A" Coaches Licence, the highest coaching award of the ISSF. He has coached at all the major ISSF Championship events as well as the Olympic Games. In December 2014, he was elected to the Executive Committee of the ISSF, where he focuses on the worldwide development of shooting sport and the continued development of the ISSF Academy.

An expert in High Performance systems, Dr. Kilty has represented the ISSF as a member of the Sports Development and Education Group of the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF). He is also the author of many articles and books on shooting coaching and is a regular contributor to the ISSF News magazine.

Dr. James M Lally

Dr. James M Lally is currently the Chairman of the ISSF Medical Committee. He graduated from the College of Osteopathic Medicine of the Pacific in 1991 and is an AOA board-certified Family Physician. A fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians, Dr. Lally serves as President and Chief Medical Officer of the Chino (California) Valley Medical Center. He holds Certificates of Added Qualifications in Sports Medicine & Geriatrics.



Dr. Lally's association with the sport of shooting began in the 1993 World Cup at Prado Tiro, Chino, California. He has participated or worked in all the Olympic Games from 1996-2016. He has served as the Team Physician to USA Shooting as well the Medical Director for shooting at the Games. He is an active member of the International Olympic Committee's medical committee. He has served as the president of USA Shooting Board from 2005-08 and has served again in that capacity from 2013-2016. He is the recipient of many honors and recognitions, including the ISSF President's pin, and the Order of the Blue Cross.



Abhinav Bindra

Abhinav Bindra is currently the Chairman of the ISSF Athletes Committee. He is the first and only athlete from India to win an individual gold medal at the Olympics, a feat that he accomplished in 2008 in the 10m Air Rifle event. He also won a gold medal at ISSF World Championships in 2006 and several medals at the Commonwealth Games and the Asian Games. He received the Padma Bhushan in 2009, which is the third-highest civilian award given by the Indian government.

Abhinav has co-authored his autobiography 'A Shot at History: My Obsessive Journey to Olympic Gold' along with Rohit Brijnath. He is grooming the next generation of athletes in India through the Abhinav Bindra Targeting Performance Programme and is a member of the advisory board at the GoSports Foundation.



Dr. Cathy Arnot

Dr. Cathy Arnot is a member of the ISSF Medical Committee. She completed her Masters of Physical Therapy from Baylor University in 1990 and graduated from the University of St. Augustine with a Doctor of Physical Therapy in 2003. She began working with USA Shooting in 2003 as part of a group of physical therapists.

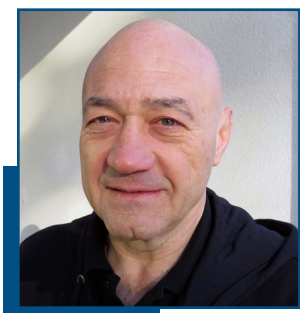
Dr. Arnot is currently teaching mobilization, manipulation, orthopaedics, ethics and therapeutic exercise in the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at the University of South Carolina. She has authored several articles and is a regular contributor to the USA Shooting News magazine.

Janie Soublière

Janie Soublière is the Legal Counsel and Consultant in Anti-Doping at the International Shooting Sport Federation. She holds a Bachelors Degree in Social Sciences (Philosophy and Political Science), a Bachelors Degree in Common Law, was called to the Bar of the Law Society of Upper Canada Bar in 2002 and holds a Masters Degree in International Sport Law.



As well as acting as legal consultant in anti-doping to International Sport Federations, Janie's legal practice is also focused on sport arbitration. She is an active roster member of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), the Athletics Integrity Unit, Sports Resolutions UK, the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC) and many International Sport Federation Doping Hearing Panels. Janie has taught Sport Law at Carleton University, acted as athlete-agent to Canadian athletes, is an Executive Board member of the Canadian Ski Hall of Fame and is a co-founding member of WISLaw (Women in Sport Law).



Dr. Claudio Robazza

Dr. Claudio Robazza is a Sport Science Instructor and a part of the lecturing team at the ISSF Academy since 2011. He holds a Masters degree in Physical Education and Psychology and has earned a PhD in Sciences and Techniques of Physical Activities and Sports. As a sport psychologist, he has been working with top-level athletes of different sports including golf, archery, modern pentathlon, rugby. He is currently involved with the Italian shooting team.

Dr. Robazza's primary research interest is in the area of performance-related emotions, performance optimization, and motor learning. He is an associate editor of Psychology of Sport and Exercise, consulting editor of Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology and has published numerous refereed journal articles.



Dr. Sean McCann

Dr. Sean McCann is a sports psychologist based out of the United States of America. He earned an undergraduate degree in Psychology from Brown University, and a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Hawaii. He has worked for the United States Olympic Committee for 27 years, including 12 years as the Head of Department. In addition to his commitment to the Olympic Committee, he works with professional athletes from a variety of sports, from ball sports to NASCAR.

In 2005, Dr. McCann received the Distinguished Professional Practice Award from the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP) for outstanding contributions to the field. In 2007, he was elected President of AASP. He has written extensively about sport psychology in a number of outlets, including refereed journals, books, magazines, brochures, and workbooks for Olympic coaches and athletes.

Dr. Digpal Ranawat

Dr. Digpal Ranawat is a professional sports physiotherapist and a certified strength and conditioning expert. He holds a Bachelors degree in Physical Therapy from Manipal University and a doctorate in Osteopathy. He is a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (from the National Strength and Conditioning Association, USA), a Certified Performance Enhancement Specialist (from the National Academy of Sports Medicine, USA), a Certified Pilates Instructor (from Polestar Pilates) and a Certified EMS trainer.



Dr. Ranawat is currently the Performance Director at the Abhinav Bindra Targeting Performance Centers. Before his current assignment, he was the personal physiotherapist to Abhinav Bindra and was part of his support team at the Rio Olympic Games.



Dr. Timothy Harkness

Dr. Timothy Harkness currently works as the Head of Sports Science and Psychology for Chelsea Football Club based out of London. In his many years as a sports psychologist, he has worked with several athletes across various sports such as archery, athletics, shooting and swimming. He is known for his proficiency in Biofeedback training.

Dr. Harkness has personally worked with Abhinav Bindra and with Lee-Roy Newton and Matthew Quinn, who were in the team that won the 4x100m gold at the 2002 World Athletics Championships. He has authored several book chapters and articles in the topic of sports psychology, especially Biofeedback, and is an avid mountain biker.

Nandan Kamath

Nandan Kamath is a graduate of Harvard Law School, the University of Oxford (on a Rhodes scholarship) and the National Law School of India. He was an avid cricketer at the junior level, representing the India Under-16's and captaining the Karnataka state team.

He currently runs a boutique sports and intellectual property law practice in Bangalore advising the country's top athletes, governing bodies, teams and brands. He is also the Managing Trustee at GoSports Foundation.



International Shooting Sport Federation: International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) is the governing body of the Olympic Shooting events in Rifle, Pistol and Shotgun disciplines, and of several non-Olympic Shooting sport events. The ISSF is involved in the regulation of the sport, Olympic qualifications and organization of international competitions such as the ISSF World Cup Series, the ISSF World Cup Finals and the ISSF World Championship in all events. Founded in 1907 as the International Shooting Union, the ISSF coordinates with over 150 National Shooting Federations from across the world to ensure the growth and development of the sport.

ISSF Athletes Committee: The ISSF Athletes Committee has been established with the objective of creating a direct link between the ISSF and the athletes. The committee coordinates activities with various international organizations and strives to ensure the best possible conditions for the athletes. By collecting comments, opinions and proposals from them, the Committee also makes relevant and timely recommendations to the ISSF Administrative Council. They represent the athletes in various international forums and initiate regular projects that promote their wellbeing.

GoSports Foundation: GoSports Foundation is a non-profit venture working towards the development of some of India's most talented emerging and elite athletes, competing in Olympic and Paralympic disciplines. Joined by India's only individual Olympic gold medalist Abhinav Bindra, former Indian cricket captain Rahul Dravid and All England Badminton Champion Pullela Gopichand on their Board of Advisors, they work with some of India's top junior Olympic and Paralympic talent, through their athlete scholarships and knowledge building programmes.



With answers to 110 questions divided across 11 sections, the ISSF Athlete's Handbook is a useful guide for shooting sport athletes on various aspects related to their personal and professional lives.

This handbook has been developed by the International Shooting Sport Federation, the ISSF Athletes Committee and various subject matter experts in collaboration with the GoSports Foundation.

